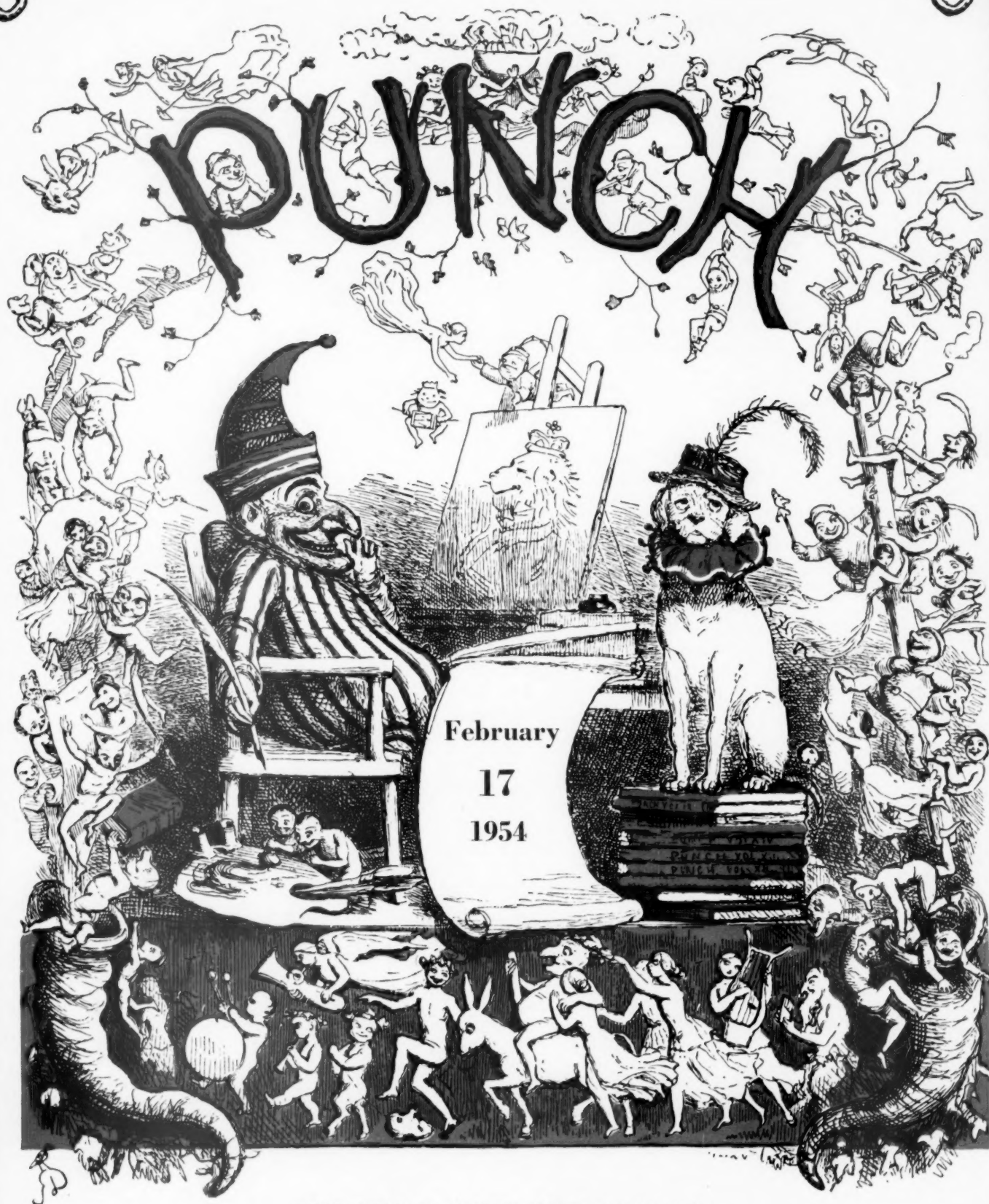


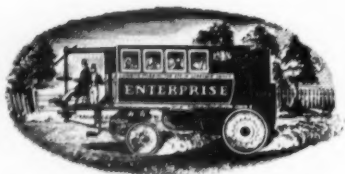
6<sup>d</sup>

PUNCH or The London Charivari—February 17 1954

6<sup>d</sup>

PUNCH OFFICE 10 BOUVERIE STREET LONDON E. C. 4

## THE LONDON OMNIBUS serves the public



Walter Hancock's steam omnibus was first introduced to a waiting public in 1833 and was named, appropriately, the 'Enterprise'.

Another public enterprise is now presented by the London Assurance with the appearance of a selection from their omnibus collection of policies.

### CONDUCT — EXCELLENT

And you will receive full marks as a father for prudence and foresight if you have provided for school fees and other educational expenses in advance by means of an Educational Policy.

### COVER POINT

Few cricket seasons pass without some injury—and it may not always be a grazed elbow. Our Sportsmen's Policy covers you financially according to the risks of the game with premiums ranging from £1 for cricket to three half-crowns for bowls—and that's a point worth remembering.

### BURNING QUESTION

How much loss would a fire cause you? Fires have a way of quickly spreading through your property, and though nothing can put back what goes up in smoke, our Fire Policy does make good your losses.

... and finally ...

If you would know more about any of the policies outlined here, if we can provide information about any other particular policies or about insurance problems generally—pray make what use of us you wish. Our address is 1 King William Street, Department T.1, London, E.C.4.

## THE LONDON ASSURANCE



Player's  
Please  
Everyone

[NOC 8481]



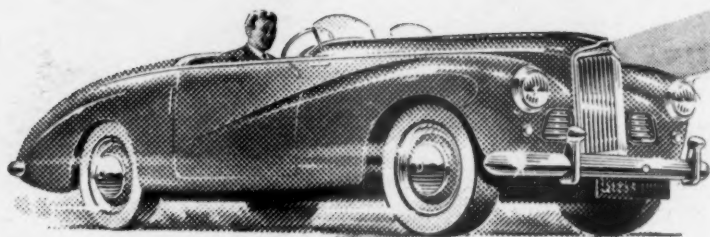
In  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. and  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. cartons  
and 1 lb. & 2 lb. boxes



Tobler  
Symphony

Perfect for Parties, Theatres or Television

EACH EXQUISITE CHOCOLATE A JOY TO EAT



## The car you judge behind the wheel...

**SIT** at the wheel of a Sunbeam-Talbot.  
Revel in the power, the acceleration, the  
stamina of this competition-bred aristocrat  
of a car. This is champagne driving.  
Luxury surrounds you. Riding comfort—road  
vision—effortless handling! These, and so many  
other new motoring thrills, will make this drive  
one of the great experiences of your life. If you  
have never before sat at the wheel of a  
Sunbeam-Talbot, be ready to revise your ideas about  
motoring enjoyment. Let your dealer arrange a trial run.

THE 2 $\frac{1}{4}$  LITRE

# Sunbeam

TALBOT AND ALPINE



Illustrated above is the Alpine sports  
two-seater. The Sunbeam-Talbot  
is available as a sports saloon  
(below) or sports convertible.



*from **EVEREST** to **SILVERSTONE**  
...from **Labrador** to **St. Andrews***

Grenfell Cloth is chosen by the pioneers of exploration and the world's leading sportsmen for its unique ability to keep out cold winds and rain—without body condensation—yet still being light in weight.

**... NOW it can be told!**

At last the latest shrink-arresting process is being applied to the close weave of Grenfell Cloth which makes it the finest weatherproof obtainable.

# Grenfell

**GOLF JACKETS · RAINCOATS · SPORTSWEAR**



Haythornthwaite  
& Sons Ltd.,  
Lodge Mill,  
Burnley, Lancs.

*Famous Grenfell Users include:*  
Sir Wilfred Grenfell  
of Labrador  
Admiral Byrd of the  
Antarctic  
Everest Expeditions  
British and American  
Hyder Cup Teams  
Stirling Moss—Racing  
Motorist  
Hans Bjornstad — World  
Ski Jump Champion  
Scottish Garwhai  
Expedition  
Norwegian Himalayan  
Expedition  
British West Greenland  
Expedition  
1953 Expedition to  
Kilimanjaro

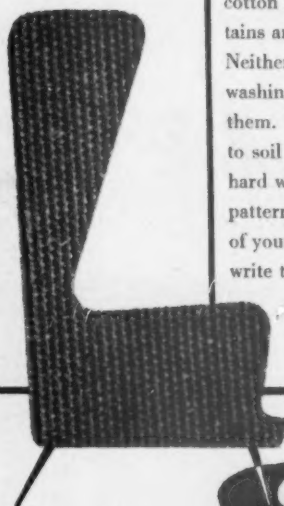


Is there a  
**HENNESSY**  
in the House?

There are  
**LITTLE ONES**  
to suit  
all pockets!

Fadeless linens  
and cotton  
repps in lovely  
colours

Bring the sunshine of fresh, unfading colour into your house. Use beautiful plain Old Bleach linens and cotton repps for curtains and upholstery. Neither sun, sea air nor washing can wither them. They are slow to soil and wonderfully hard wearing. For patterns and the name of your nearest supplier write to Old Bleach



**Old Bleach**

FURNISHING FABRICS

Dept T4

Old Bleach Furnishings Ltd., Randalstown, N. Ireland. Trade Showrooms: 26 Berners St., London, W.1



## HOMEMAKERS' PAGE



# MAKING THE MOST OF **SOLID FUEL**

*A review of modern appliances and services  
that can help you get far more warmth  
for your money—with far less work!*

**MODERN** appliances have now made solid fuel by far the best bet for all home heating. Scientifically designed and skilfully built, they can give you up to twice as much useful heat as the older types—with much less work. And they burn very well on the smaller sizes of fuel that now form a large part of our supplies.

Brief notes on the main types are given on the right, but to be able to choose, from a wide variety, the precise appliance best suited to your particular need, you will want far more detailed information. This you can obtain, without any obligation whatsoever, by using the services described below.

*These advisory services are free to all*



**AUTHORISED SOLID FUEL APPLIANCES SERVICE.** More than 750 firms throughout Britain display the yellow sign shown above. It means that they can show you a good selection of the new appliances and employ staff trained by the Coal Utilisation Council to advise you which ones will suit you best. They will also arrange for correct installation—a most important point. Call in where you see this sign and talk things over. You will hear a great deal of solid sense.

**COAL UTILISATION COUNCIL INFORMATION CENTRES.** These have been established in many large centres. You will find in them a good display of the new appliances and trained demonstrators, able and very willing to answer all your questions. Use all these services—and prove to yourself that these days it is indeed solid fuel for comfort and economy.



**COAL MERCHANTS' DIPLOMA SERVICE.** An increasing number of coal merchants now hold the Coal Utilisation Council's Technical Diploma. This entitles them to display the red sign shown above and means that members of their staffs know all about the best available fuels for these new appliances. They can tell you the supply position of the various fuels, suggest suitable alternatives when necessary, and will help you in general to make the most of your allocation.

### IMPROVED OPEN FIRES

Fitted with an adjustable air control, these fires can be slowed down when the room is not in use and brightened instantly when required. Some will burn continuously over-night—no dreary lighting up on cold mornings—others have built-in gas lighters. All burn small coal and smokeless solid fuels.



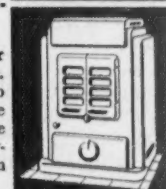
### CONVECTOR FIRES

These embody an entirely new principle. The whole fireback is surrounded by a narrow air space, in which cool air, drawn in at the base, is heated and circulated right round the room through grilles at the top. Result—a room warm all over and much more heat from the same amount of fuel.



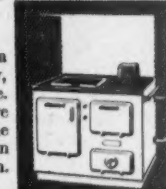
### HIGHLY EFFICIENT STOVES

Even more efficient than convector fires, and most attractive in appearance. In some, the doors can be opened to reveal the bright fire within. Like the new fires, these stoves can incorporate ample hot water boilers, and have easy-clean enamel finishes. Either built-in or free-standing.



### FREE-STANDING COOKERS

Continuous burning and usually with a back boiler for hot water supply, these cookers will please every housewife. Big hotplates and efficient ovens are always ready for action and offer the bonus of pleasant background heat in the kitchen. Find out more about them.



### COMBINATION GRATES

A cheerful open fire in the kitchen-living room, which heats one or more ovens and a hotplate, and plenty of hot water... here is the ideal combination for many homes. The new models are highly efficient, burn a wide range of fuels, can be continuous-burning and are in easy-clean finishes.

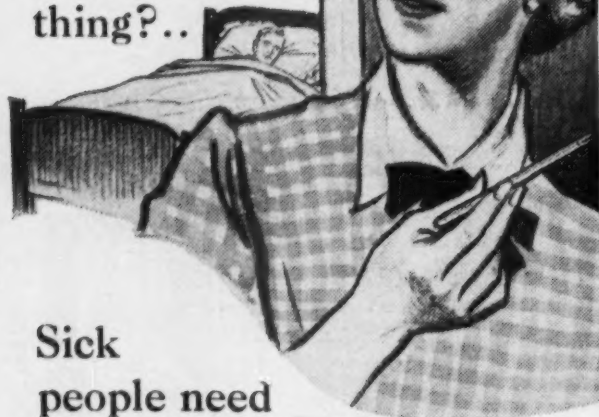


### INDEPENDENT BOILERS

Many variations are now available, each with particular advantages. But all have these things in common:—Far higher efficiency: easy-clean finish: ability to stay alight without attention for long periods: greater cleanliness and improved ash disposal arrangements.



You're not forgetting the most important thing?...



Sick people need protein to speed recovery

WHEN people are ill or feverish, they feel a natural aversion to eating. But in fact they *do* need food, especially body-building protein. The trouble is, their digestions aren't capable of dealing with ordinary food and extracting from it the nourishment they so badly need.

But they can safely take *Brand's Essence*. This clear jelly presents protein of fine beef or chicken in solution, fat-free, so that there is *nothing* in it to irritate. What's more, *Brand's Essence*, cooked under high pressure at a high temperature (something you just couldn't do at home) is what you might call "pre-digested"; it has already undergone the first stage of digestion, which normally takes place in the stomach.

Thus *Brand's Essence* is very easily absorbed, quickly

supplying valuable nourishment without strain on the system. But it also stimulates the digestive juices and so encourages *natural* appetite. Your invalid is soon able to take more food—and start on the road to real recovery.

Because of this twofold action, *Brand's Essence* is equally effective in minor ailments—'flu, colds, stomach upsets, or when someone is "too tired to eat." You should always keep a jar of *Brand's* in reserve, in case a member of the family falls ill, or even feels "off-colour." There is nothing else like it—valuable protein, pre-digested, palatable, and so easy for you to give when you're extra busy with sickness in the house.



## Brand's Essence

Beef 3/3 Chicken 4/3



"The London Bedding Centre has all the latest ideas"

London's  
Permanent  
Sales Centre for  
BEAUTYREST  
BILLOWBED  
DUNLOPILLO  
RELYON  
SLEEPEEZEE  
SLUMBERLAND  
SOMNUS  
STAPLES  
VI-SPRING  
Bedding



This wonderful new round divan fits ideally into the corner of a room, so giving much more space. It consists of a pocketed spring interior mattress on a sprung edge divan covered in an attractive Regency striped damask with upholstered headboard, mounted on castors. Size 6ft. 6in. x 5ft.: £75 complete.

## The London Bedding Centre

A JOHN PERRING Enterprise

13 Brompton Road, **KNIGHTSBRIDGE** S.W.3 Phone: KNI 1777  
or from **JOHN PERRING**—7 Richmond Road, **KINGSTON-on-Thames**



## She's cleaning her teeth

Or rather, she has safely left the job of *oxygen-cleaning* her dentures to "Steradent", while she does her hair.

Like all fastidious wearers of dentures, she knows the importance of cleaning them *thoroughly* with something made for the purpose.

She knows that the kindest way to clean dentures properly is to steep them every day for 20 minutes in half a tumbler of water which

contains Steradent. Steradent does the job gently but surely, by blending the actions of alkali and busy purifying oxygen. It removes film and stains, disinfects the dentures in every crevice, and leaves them so sweet and fresh that the tongue can feel how clean they are.

It always pays to use something made for the job, and Steradent is so economical. Buy a flask today: 2/5 and 1/4.

Leave the job to *Steradent*...  
—specially made to clean dentures





By Appointment  
Purveyor of Cherry Heering  
to  
The late King George VI



By Appointment  
Purveyor of Cherry Heering  
to H. M.  
King Frederik IX



By Appointment  
Purveyor of Cherry Heering  
to H. M.  
King Gustaf VI Adolf



By Appointment  
Purveyor of Cherry Heering  
to H. M.  
The Queen of the Netherlands

## Precious moments

Through four generations

CHERRY HEERING has  
witnessed as well as created

many precious moments.

Unchanged since 1818, this old Danish delight  
will grace your day whenever and  
wherever you meet with it.



# CHERRY HEERING

World famous liqueur since 1818

## Lady—you're wearing my coat

An obliging little character the Llama. He willingly  
sheds his summer coat for your winter warmth—your luxury.

Llama hair (alpaca), softer by far than sheep's wool and  
more durable, finds its loveliest interpretation in "Motoluxe".  
Coats, Motor Rugs, Foot Muffs—and other accessories—even

Coats for men Here is quality  
without extravagance.



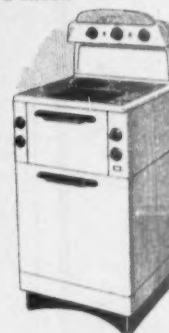
Write or call for name of nearest supplier to Sole Manufacturers  
LEE BROTHERS (OVERWEAR) LTD. Showrooms: 45 Conduit St., London, W.1.

## The fastest cooker ever made? IT'S FOR YOU TO JUDGE

People are telling us that the new Tricity Queen cooks a meal in  
a shorter time—a very much shorter time—than any other cooker  
in the world. We're pleased, of course, but we rather expected it  
would. We designed it that way. We know too, that the oven is  
larger, heats faster and uses even less current than any other  
cooker. Incredible? No, just straight forward facts.

Now supposing you want to be out all day and  
there's a family home for dinner? Nothing could  
be easier with the Tricity Queen; you switch over  
to 'Auto'—dinner cooks itself. And it's all done  
so simply a child can manage first time. You can  
hardly believe it? We can understand that, but  
it's fact all the same. And there's more to tell;  
at least a hundred more exciting facts about this  
Tricity Queen—does that surprise you? It  
shouldn't... we pioneered electric cookers fifty  
years ago and are still in the lead today!

The best way to judge the Tricity Queen is to see  
it for yourself. Post the coupon now.



To: TRICITY COOKERS LTD., 109 KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C.2

Please send coloured brochure and address of nearest stockist.



NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

P.2



## Can you spot the sheep in wolf's clothing?



Active Carbon *can*—  
at a molecular level, of  
course. It is used for removing  
unwanted smells and tastes from  
food and beverages, for purifying  
water, clarifying solutions and  
reclaiming solvents. It is a catalyst  
carrier in the production of P.V.C.

Wherever Active Carbon comes in useful,  
you'll find that the people who  
know all about it are . . .

**SUTCLIFFE  
SPEAKMAN**

SUTCLIFFE SPEAKMAN AND COMPANY LIMITED

LEIGH · LANCASHIRE · Telephone: Leigh 94

London Office: 2 Caxton Street, Westminster, S.W.1. Telephone: Abbey 5085

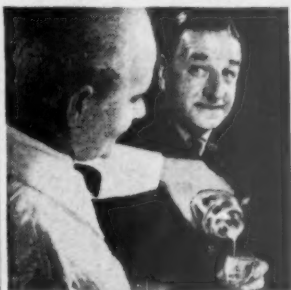
## Ronald Shiner learns the barman's secret



You're really going to enjoy this,  
Mr. Shiner. It's something special.



Mmm! That certainly is smooth  
Come on now—what's the secret?



All very simple, Mr. Shiner. This is  
made with the smoother gin . . .



... Curtis Gin. Curtis is much smoother,  
because it's matured in cask.



Never mind the reason—I'm happy  
with the result!

"CLEAR" AND "OLD GOLD"  
in bottles, half bottles,  
six nip or three nip flasks

# Curtis Gin

CASK MATURING MAKES CURTIS SMOOTHER  
Curtis Gin is matured in cask. There it  
becomes more gracious . . . more mellow  
. . . in fact *smoother*. Ask your barman for  
Curtis, or take a bottle home — today.  
You'll like it better.



There's no Service like  
**ATCO**  
Service



**ATCO and SHANKS  
join hands.**

This means:—  
A wider than ever range  
of mowing equipment—  
hand, motor and gang  
—and sold through the  
Atco Sales Organisation.  
Atco Service is now  
available to owners of  
Shanks mowers from  
Atco Service Branches  
throughout the country.



By Appointment  
to the  
Late King George VI  
Charles H. Pugh Ltd.  
Motor Mower  
Manufacturers

ATCO are the only makers  
of motor mowers who  
operate their own SERVICE  
BRANCHES throughout the  
British Isles for the express  
purpose of providing  
service facilities to owners  
wherever they may live.  
The unique completeness  
of this service, commanding  
facilities, experience  
and economies available  
only from the manufac-  
turer, explains the wide-  
spread goodwill enjoyed  
by both Atco Service and  
Atco Motor Mowers.

Your Atco Supplier, if you wish  
it, can put you in touch with  
your ATCO SERVICE BRANCH.

CHARLES H. PUGH LTD.  
ATCO WORKS,  
BIRMINGHAM 9

## MERCHANT VENTURERS OF THE FIRST



### *Elizabethan Age*

Founder of Virginia, brave and persistent explorer, Sir Walter Raleigh embodies for all time the spirit of Elizabethan merchant enterprise.

That spirit is our heritage. National Provincial Bank, with its widespread services to British industry and trade, is proud of the part it will be privileged to play in the fortunes of a new Elizabethan age.

**NATIONAL PROVINCIAL  
BANK LIMITED**

*The  
measure of  
man's regard  
for time..*



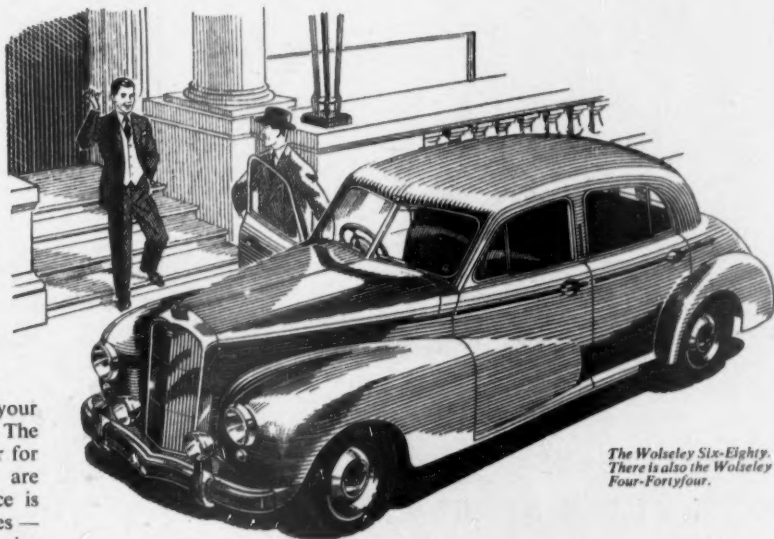
With this AUTOMATIC '331',  
**MOVADO** has quietly made watch history.

Never before has so slim a case housed a full self-winding movement. The secret? An oscillating weight made of a new alloy nearly as heavy as uranium. The price? £28.0.0 in a stainless steel waterproof case.

**MOVADO** the highly prized watch

• 168 FIRST OBSERVATORY AWARDS

Your car  
is your  
visiting  
card...



*The Wolseley Six-Eighty.  
There is also the Wolseley  
Four-Fortyfour.*

it speaks of your standing and that of your Company in language all men understand. The Wolseley Six-Eighty is in truth the perfect car for the business executive. Its modern lines are conservative yet impressive. Its performance is first-class. Its roominess, and interior amenities — car heater, controlled ventilation, twin interior lights and extra large locker capacity, etc.—are those of a car costing considerably more to buy and to run. A phone call to your nearest Wolseley showroom will quickly ensure convincing evidence.



*Buy wisely—buy*

# WOLSELEY

**WOLSELEY MOTORS LTD • COWLEY • OXFORD**

London Showrooms: 12 Berkeley Street, W.1. Overseas Business: Nuffield Exports Ltd., Oxford and 41 Piccadilly, London, W.1.



**CHANGE  
FOR THE BETTER!**

-enjoy the difference

When you'd rather have one of his than one of yours—that's the time to change your brand. A change to Philip Morris may prove a pleasant change. They are definitely different and that difference means finer flavour, richer aroma, more smoking pleasure. Try a packet today



Twenty for 3/9

**CALL FOR PHILIP MORRIS**  
uncommonly good cigarettes



**TWO GLASSES  
WITH BUT A SINGLE THOUGHT**

WHEN discerning diners end a well-considered meal, Grand Marnier is to the forefront of their minds. This great liqueur is their password to a private world, where philosophy flourishes and contentment reigns. Made exclusively with Cognac brandy and matured for years in the dark rock cellars of the Château de Bourg-Charente, Grand Marnier will introduce your palate to a pleasure which cannot be described in words but only discussed at length in glasses. Enjoy a glass of France's finest liqueur tonight.

**Grand Marnier**

FRANCE'S FINEST LIQUEUR

SOLE DISTRIBUTORS: L. ROSE & CO. LTD., ST. ALBANS, HERTS.



*Soft to wear—  
hard to wear out...*

Non-felting . . . strongly reinforced . . . carry this guarantee—should dissatisfaction arise through any defect in the article Tootal will replace it or refund the price.

Socks 9/11 a pair, Boys' Stockings (sizes 6½-10)  
about 8/6 to 11/6 a pair.

**TOOTAL  
SOCKS**

TOOTAL BROADHURST LEE CO. LTD. 56 OXFORD STREET, MANCHESTER 1



# DAKS REGD dinner suit



There are two essentials to a dinner suit. One, that it should look immaculate. Two, that it should feel cool and comfortable whatever the surroundings. Simpson tailoring achieves both — superbly. This year you have a choice of two cloths: a fine barathea, price £25.10.0. and a lightweight 'Zephair', a new wool and mohair mixture, price £28



Daks Suits — third floor

Simpson (Piccadilly) Ltd, London W.1 Regent 2002

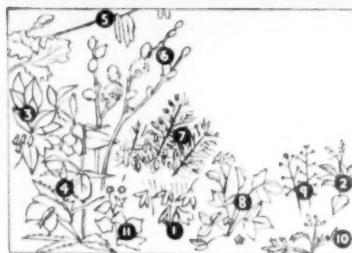
# SHELLGUIDE to FEBRUARY lanes

Arranged and painted by Edith and Rowland Hilder



FLOWERS in February? It is true that the elms are bare still against the sky and the ploughlands are naked and brown as autumn oak leaves. But (1) *Snowdrops*, or *February Fair Maids*, or *Candlemas Bells* are now deliciously white and green. Commoner woodland kinds in flower are (2) *Dog's Mercury*, poisonous, but making a wide green carpet, and the leathery (3) *Spurge Laurel*, poisonous again. Under the hazels, may be found the queer livid blossoms of (4) *Green Hellebore*, and on the edge of the wood our hands go up to the first (5) *Lamb's Tails* or *hazel catkins*, symbol of the spring, and to the first (6) *Goslings*, or *Goose-chicks*, or *catkins of the sallow*, as soft as down, and like goslings lately hatched.

On the common, patches of (7) *Gorse* are on fire, and on the banks the (8) *Barren Strawberry*, (9) *Shepherd's Purse* will be exhibiting both flowers and their purse-like seed cases. The yellow (10) *Groundsel*—the name means 'ground-swallower'—is always about; and so are the small blue flowers of (11) *Buxbaum's Speedwell*, or the *Persian Speedwell*.

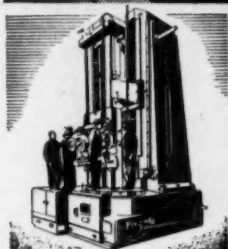
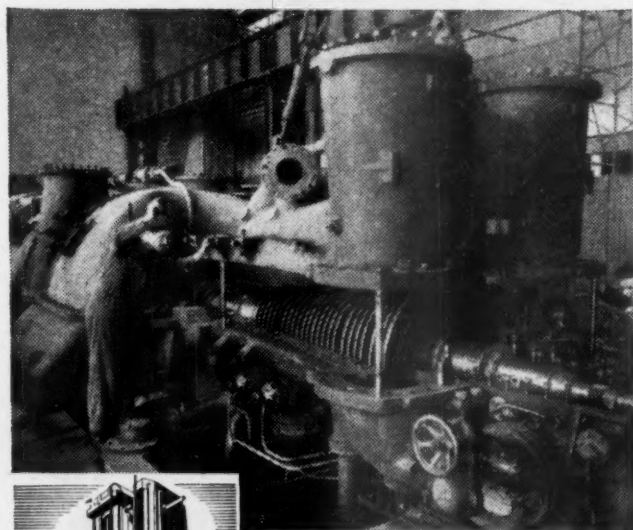


You can be  
sure of



THE KEY TO THE COUNTRYSIDE

# Settling down



36-in. turbine pinion hobber, built by David Brown for the famous Ansaldo Shipbuilding Works, Genoa, Italy.



The Lagonda 3-litre Sports Saloon has the true thoroughbred qualities. This princely car, so well mannered at 90 m.p.h., is individually built. It combines the coachwork of master craftsmen with the most advanced engineering design. It is one of the very few cars in the world to be fitted with independent suspension on all four wheels.

## to a big job

As the top half of this high pressure casing (cast by David Brown) is lowered carefully into position, a new 30 MW turbo alternator nears completion. The installation is known as the No. 3 extension to the British Electricity Authority's power station at Huddersfield. In all, David Brown have supplied four castings for this job, each demanding the utmost in foundry and metallurgical skill. Like all the David Brown Companies, the Foundry at Penistone has the craftsmen, the technical resources, and the inventiveness to compete successfully in the markets of the world.

## THE DAVID BROWN COMPANIES

An alliance of engineering specialists  
in gearing, steel & bronze castings, automobiles,  
and agricultural tractors & machinery.

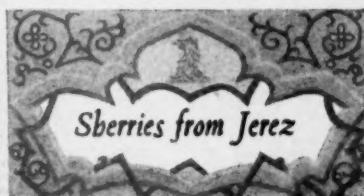
DAVID BROWN & SONS (HUDDERSFIELD) LTD.  
THE DAVID BROWN FOUNDRIES COMPANY  
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THE DAVID BROWN TOOL COMPANY  
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DAVID BROWN PRECISION EQUIPMENT (PTY.) LTD.  
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Sole selling agent in the U.K.:  
THE DAVID BROWN CORPORATION (SALES) LIMITED  
Head Office: 96/97 Piccadilly, London, W.1



Chaplins is a name to conjure with in the wine trade—for it is close on ninety years since Chaplins brought their first batch of fine sherries from Jerez de la Frontera. Connoisseurs of sherry, whether their taste be for light or dark, say Chaplins and there's an end to it. Chaplins it has to be. Here's a choice of six of the best to suit all tastes.



## CHAPLINS fine sherries and Concord ports

W. H. Chaplin & Co. Ltd, Tower Hill, London, E.C3  
W. H. Chaplin & Co. (Scotland) Ltd, 22 Butehill Street, Glasgow G.2



CELESTA a delicate pale dry Fino  
MARINA a rare Manzanilla  
ST. TERESA distinctive Amontillado  
PLAZA an old golden Oloroso  
TOM BOWLING rich broken Oloroso  
TARANTELA traditional dark sherry

## INTERESTED IN EMERGENCY LIGHTING?

### Send for these informative booklets

Nife - Neverfayle emergency lighting has several important advantages—advantages you should know about before installing an emergency system.

Nife - Neverfayle emergency lighting units are:

#### DEPENDABLE:

Power is instantly available because Nife Steel-Alkaline Batteries do not deteriorate even during long periods of inactivity.

#### CONVENIENT:

Nife equipment is exceptionally compact and there is no need for a separate battery room.

#### ECONOMICAL:

Since the electrolyte and active materials in the batteries are of great stability, maintenance costs next to nothing.

## NIFE- NEVERFAYLE

the emergency equipment with the  
steel-alkaline battery

NIFE BATTERIES, REDDITCH, WORCS.

Please send me booklets giving detailed information of NIFE-NEVERFAYLE units for \_\_\_\_\_ (CINEMA, HOSPITAL, PUBLIC BLDG, ETC.)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_



N54C





## CONSUL

*the Car for the Occasion*



*By Appointment Motor  
Vehicle Manufacturers to  
the late King George VI  
Ford Motor Company Ltd.*

FOR THE THEATRE  
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*Its qualities are these:— The elegance of line, spaciousness and  
smooth acceleration that flatter the formal occasion.*

*On the road, high and effortless cruising speed,  
a serenely even ride and perfect cornering.*

*Always, a comforting economy of running costs.*

*You have thought of everything when you choose a*

## CONSUL

*Its performance is a pleasure*

*Its price a surprise £470 Plus P.T. £196.19.2*

# FORD '5-STAR' MOTORING



*THE BEST AT LOWEST COST*



**A**MONG questions to test would-be guides to London was, "What happened recently to the Henry VIII wine cellar at Whitehall Palace?" The official answer, that it was moved to make room for new Government offices, suggests that guides wishing to be really up-to-date with this sort of information should take frequent refresher courses.

#### Twenty Years' Hard

**H**IGHLIGHT of the Berlin meetings was Mr. Eden's offer to Mr. Molotov to prolong the life of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty beyond its present duration of twenty years—"should he feel that this would give added security to the Soviet Union." Mr. Molotov, it is reported, did not comment on this proposal, and diplomatic circles are wondering whether to take this as a hopeful indication that he thought the Treaty in its present form would see him safely through the Conference.

#### Out of Joint

**I**N ANY ordinary February the assertion by the Soccer Correspondent of *The Times* that "Absolute mastery of the ball is the first principle of football" might have



prompted a whole series of related theories—that the first principle of singing was absolute mastery of the voice, or that the first principle of riding was absolute mastery of the horse. But this is not an ordinary February. A latter-day Mowgli has

turned up in a railway train; a wife has charged her husband with putting golf tees in her bed; an Italian mayor has fended off wolves with his motor-scooter. In this sort of context the continued elucidation of first principles seems rather a waste of time.

#### More Blessed to Give

**I**T is reported that America has opened a new chapter of technical assistance by allocating \$1,000,000 to teach Brazilians how to grow coffee. To forestall the clamour for a working party on egg-sucking by Under-developed World Grandmothers it should be said that the Americans cannot be expected to shoulder the whole burden. The



Commonwealth gives aid and comfort to South-east Asia under the Colombo Plan, and the Japanese, according to their Ambassador in Washington, are thinking of starting an aid scheme of their own. If the so-called backward nations feel the need to do something in return, they might send advisory teams to the U.S. and the U.K. to give lessons in how to spend money.

#### Blood in Their Ink

**J**UST out is No. 1, Vol. I, (Spring Number) of *The Crime Writer*, organ of the newly-formed Crime Writers' Association. The journal is packed with ideas for the furtherance of crime in print: a National Crime Book Week is contemplated, a solution proposed to the Case of the

Unsympathetic Reviewer, and there will even be an information panel set up, which may in time relieve pressure on overworked National Health doctors pestered for news of



the latest undetectable drugs. No attention seems to have been given so far to members' most pressing problem to-day—how to make crime fiction stranger than fact.

#### No Favouritism

**O**NE aim of the Merchant Shipping Bill, said Mr. Hugh Molson in moving its second reading, was the encouragement of ship-owners to provide engine-rooms of a size convenient to the men working in them. The Merchant Navy is, of course, entitled to ultimate parity with the Royal Navy on this point, where every man in the engine-room enjoys ample space to swing his spanner.

#### First on the Rotor

**S**COOPS are rare in Fleet Street to-day, so it was a thrill to see the *Evening Standard* romp home unchallenged with a sensational item. Beginning on the front page (nine inches), the story leaped to page eight (fifty-four inches), to page nine (ten inches), to the back page (nineteen inches) and the Stop Press (two inches). The *Evening News* made a gesture of pursuit, but gave up, blowing badly, after a three-and-a-half inch canter on page two. The *Star* never started. This meant that many home-going

Londoners never heard about the alleged low flying of Lord Beaverbrook's helicopter at all.

### Jump Behind

**A** WRITTEN Parliamentary answer discloses that nearly a million drivers in England and Scotland have failed to pass the driving test in the past five years. In the view of most motorists they also make pretty poor pedestrians.

### Birth of a Tradition?

**L**ACK of success by the Road Haulage Disposal Board in re-selling denationalized road fleets to their former owners poses a problem for future Socialist Governments committed to renationalization.

Even the anfractuositities of departmental procedure offer no means of depriving a man for the second time of something he has not yet had back. Perhaps in time nationalizing and denationalizing will become, with respective Governments, mere Parliamentary rituals. Black Rod will bang three times and nationalization will be deemed to be here; with changes on the Government benches the same ceremony will signify a state of denationalization. Thus party consciences will be satisfied, and the country's essential services go on unaffected.

### Count No Chickens

**A**NNOUNCEMENTS of plans for lighter television programmes should perhaps be treated with

reserve for the moment. It is some time now since Moscow Radio made a promise of the same kind, in spite of which a recent talk was entitled, "The People's Vigilance in the People's Democracies Dooms to Failure the Machinations of the Imperialist Espionage Services."

### Tiber Washes Whiter

**W**AS none who would be foremost To lead such dire attack?

The housewives all cried "Forward!"

The advertisers, "Back!"

But brave Sir Richard Acland,

His cartons by his side,

Through Surf and Persil, Fab and Daz

(What names the soapless powder has!)

Plunged headlong in the Tide.



**W**HEN I was a boy in Naples I used to go and see the Punch and Judy shows. In those crude and unprogressive days, the puppet-master used to cower down behind the booth-front and stick his fingers into the figures of Punch and Judy and Toby and make them do their antics before the admiring crowd. How different it is to-day. In this age of progress the people have living puppets to dance for their delight.

On the Via Roma the other day I saw them all dancing up and down before the eyes of the admiring populace. The names are no longer Punch and Judy but delightful, new and real Italian names, such as Pella and de Gasperi, Togliatti, Fanfani, Scelba, Saragat, Nenni.

These puppets no longer moved to the crude finger of a manipulator, but each danced to a tune that was played to him upon a wire—a wire along which were passed to him electric currents that were operated by what is known as "remote control" and were played to him not by crude fingers of the flesh but by distant masters, who lived as far away as Moscow and Washington.

There is no nation that loves a puppet-show as the Italians love it, and no nation that does it half so

well. The people shouted with delight and laughed with glee. The only trouble was that for the moment there are two rival shows playing before the public, and this is a little confusing—the more so as sometimes the wires seem to get a little entangled, and sometimes it is not quite clear to which of the tunes some of the puppets are dancing.

Meanwhile the hurdy-gurdy goes on churning out its repeated but favourite song:

*There is some use*

*In Mrs. Luce.*

*For, though five-sixths of her is phony,*

*At least she gets us macaroni.*

I asked one of the spectators



whether it would not be less confusing to merge the two shows into one—and then we could all know where we were. But he thought not. "The cost of everything," he explained, "has gone up—and not least the cost of war. Italy is a poor country. How can we afford a war unless somebody else pays for it? If we had only one master he would not give us the money to put on a proper show. But it is competition which is the breath of life. We can now say to each master 'If you do not pay we will go over to the other.' It is thus that we are able to afford two puppet shows, where we would never be able to afford only one."

It was, I think, a wise opinion, but every game—even the game of democracy—has its rules and the Italians must be careful that they do not overstep them. If you would have democracy there are all sorts of things that you may do. You may lie and cheat and bribe and bully and misrepresent the issue, but just plain, straightforward counting of the votes wrong and then leaving them, lying about, unfudged, for somebody else to come along afterwards and count them right, is a bit too much. It shakes people's confidence in the integrity of the system.

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS



# RALLYING ROUND THE CENTRE



"It is necessary to rally round the centre if Italy's present difficulties are to be overcome."

SIGNOR SCILBA

# Tuesday's Friday Too, Now

BY J. B. BOOTHROYD



**I**N future *Reveille* is to sound its stirring trumpet notes twice weekly. Through five hundred and fifty-four issues its headlines have been slowly perfecting a technique of bizarre enticement—"He Drowned Thirty-five Hats," "Shrimp-scatter for Cat that Wasn't," "Forced King on to Red-hot Throne"—and readers will be able to see, as of yesterday, whether world events in the news can stand up to the double drain.

In its once-weekly form the paper has not usually carried an editorial. Its front page was devoted to young ladies in fish-net stockings (rounded off, perhaps, with a smart little umbrella, as in "Looking for Her Rain Beau," issue No. 551), and

framed in joke-drawings on traditional themes of matrimonial infelicity. But *Reveille* for February 5 carried a front-page Message, beginning "Dear Folks," and ending "All Good Wishes, the Editor." It was in this way that readers, after the first shock of finding the printed word rubbing shoulders with a young lady in fish-net stockings and a couple of big black sequined semi-quavers ("Melody Maid"), learned the glad tidings: *Reveille*, once the Friday mainstay of a drab and sagging week, was to be joined by another stout prop on Tuesdays. "It will really be a TUESDAY TONIC," wrote the Editor—"the sort of thing you need in the middle of the week." Well done.

If the Tuesday Tonic is anything like the Friday Fricassée, a hundred or so of the new pages will be filled by the readers, which is an economical way to fill a page. The main theme is often suggested by the Chatterbox Editor, a man with an eye for a topic if ever there was one. Learning of a mother who keeps her baby in the oven, for instance, he will tempt readers, for a guinea prize, to say what *their* ovens get used for, and thus provoke a flood of schemes for thawing tortoisés, or keeping savings secure, or banishing freckles. If anything, the Chatterbox Editor is over-zealous, and gets correspondents enthusiastic about a new subject while old ones are still declaring dividends. This leads to confusion for inexperienced readers, who may find the page dealing at a gulp with My Most Exciting Telephone Call, Freak Promises, Unromantic Males ("After my boy friend had given me a long passionate kiss one night he suddenly said, 'I must mix the pig swill when I get home'"), How to Get Baby to Sleep, Favourite Smells, and other topics whose inception is lost in limbo. Who can say, for example, what inspired this cathartic spasm from M.D., Sheffield?

"When my grandfather ate kippers he always used to **change into an old shirt, scorn a knife and fork, and use his fingers.** Every so often he crossed his arms over his chest and wiped his left hand up and down his right arm, and vice versa."

Or this, from L. D. B., Bingley?

"I was out walking in my new plus-fours. Two women passed me and I heard one say 'Do you like 'em?' 'Orrible!' said the other. 'They look like bloomers.'"

But preoccupation with food, particularly sea-food, is a recurrent manifestation on this page, and may be independent of editorial prompting—unless it reflects the tireless revolutions of some cerebral fly-wheel set spinning long ago. A.P., of London, describes how her mother ate half a sole in a restaurant and then "whispered that she'd enjoy the rest when she got her stays off at home"; and A.I., Sheffield, reports



J.W. TAYLOR

"Not for me, thanks, I'm driving."

an embarrassment caused to a girl friend of hers by a boy friend of hers. "We had fish and chips," she was told, "and when we'd done he wiped his hands—not on his trousers but on the inside of his cap." (This has a holier-than-thou ring: A.I., no doubt, only goes out with boys who wipe their hands on the proper garment.)

But for some people the flat ventilation of life as it is lived fails to satisfy. There are those with problems, and no one to turn to but Miss Jane Blythe, the paper's "Lighten Your Heart" consultant, who, one must admit, can deal a shrewd blow when occasion arises. An unhappy reader writes:

"I do like a nice breakfast in the morning, and although my wife is perfect in many ways she always burns the toast. I am getting in a state of nerves about it. What shall I do?"

Answer: "Make your own toast." Well done, Miss Blythe. Your impatience with the inquirer is fully justified. The wonder is that you judged his dilemma worth its space—to say nothing of the tasteful surround in which the printers framed it and the crisp heading, "ON TOAST", with which you introduced it.

Let Jane discern genuine distress in a correspondent, however, and she is all sound sense, never more so than when a reader has struck a loved one—a common lapse.

"My girl friend has a quick temper and recently hit me sharply on the head. I'd had a few beers and gave her a great whack back, knocking her out."

Or, again:

"Then we had our worst row of all. I lost my temper and struck her. She took me to court and lost the case. I have since tried to make it up, but . . ."

Or, yet again:

"This has led to many rows, finally to one terrific rumpus during which I lost my head and struck her. I then walked out . . . Now I don't know what to do."

An apology is the usual recommendation in such cases, and it certainly seems an essential rung on the ladder of reconciliation. In others, more positive comfort can sometimes be offered. The merchant seaman of only twenty-one who writes to say that he has lost his hair



and, as a result, his girl, ending despairingly, "Do bald men ever get married?" touches off a powerful explosion of compassionate elements:

"OF COURSE THEY DO," comes the well-informed reply. "Recent investigations show that bald men are often the most passionate, and have a fatal fascination for women of discrimination . . ."

Somewhere on the high seas a sigh of pure relief goes winging into the blue.

It is a pity that space forbids a complete survey of the Friday (and

now Tuesday) twopence-halfpenny-worth; of the world news ("Marilyn Monroe Plays a Guitar"), of the literary essays ("King was Served Midget Knight in Pie"), even of the advertisements ("Skin Sufferers Report Amazing Success of New Non-Greasy Balm" [Advt.]). But it is in the correspondence columns, after all, that an editor and his readers draw close; and it is here that the critical observer can sense the dumb accord of their beating hearts.

### Necks are being worn stiff, this year

*Pandit Nehru (who once sent his laundry air mail to Paris) now orders Indian Civil Servants to abandon Western dress and adopt homespun close-collared coats without ties.*

**N**EHRU finds Indians in Western dress

A cause of ideological distress.

The Harrovian Pandit, turned Hindu tailoring pundit, Has looked at our "snobbish" wear, and shunned it, Tells his Civil Servants in smart pin-stripe coat and vest They show a base subservience to the West. Theirs not to reason why, or even do or die, But cut the strangulating knot of the European tie.

LAWRENCE BENEDICT



# A Dog's Best Friend

BY MARJORIE RIDDELL

**M**Y mother wrote and said it was disgraceful. The new people next door the other way from Mrs. Plant had a little dog as big as an Alsatian who was *quite out of control*. His name was Archie. He kept galloping into our garden and my father had planted a lupin *three times* while a chrysanthemum had disappeared completely. People shouldn't keep dogs if they didn't know any better than to crash about among other people's flowers like a horse.

Archie came that very morning when my father was at the office. He stood on the path and wriggled at her while she flapped her hands at him through the window. Then she went outside and said shoo shoo and he rolled over on his back and let her

scratch his chest. Archie, my mother was talking about, not my father. So my mother gave him a biscuit and told him he mustn't dig the plants up because my father had just put them in and they were very expensive.

Then Mrs. Chipmunk or Phillips or something like that came out and said I must ask you not to entice my dog away from the house. So my mother said I beg your pardon? And Mrs. Thing said I must ask you not to entice my dog away from the house. And my mother said I thought that was what you said and now I am sure, how dare you. I have not enticed your dog. Your dog repeatedly ravages our garden and I would be grateful if you would keep him under control. And Mrs. Thing

said how dare you. My dog is perfectly under control. So my mother said if that is what you think then I am afraid you do not know very much about your dog. I am very, very sorry for your dog. And Mrs. Thing said are you may I ask are you suggesting that I do not know how to look after my dog? And my mother said oh no good gracious me no but I certainly can't help thinking, and I'd advise you to do the same or I must warn you that we shall take action.

My mother wrote again three days later. She was keeping all her scraps for Archie and the poor little thing was ravenous. She didn't know what she was going to do. He even ate the bread she put out for the birds and the fish skins she put out for the ginger cat with one ear. I mustn't tell my father. Archie had dug up a young rhododendron bush and my mother only just had time to put it back before my father came home. It was dead now.

A week later my mother wrote and said she was getting biscuits and tinned dog food for Archie because he didn't like horse-meat.

In her next letter my father had known everything all along and now it was all over. This has gone far enough my father said, and my mother said well I can't help it what do you want me to do? How can I keep him out, he is bigger than I am. Do you want me to throw him out with my bare hands I am not a lion tamer. So my father said it is ridiculous to behave like this over a strange dog who is practically living here now and if I wanted a dog I would have one.

So Archie had a bed now in the kitchen, on legs because of the draught. Mrs. Thing had absolutely washed her hands of him and my mother was never going to speak to her again.



"You might have spruced up a bit for Viscountess Boyle and the Duchesses."

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"VICAR'S LETTER."

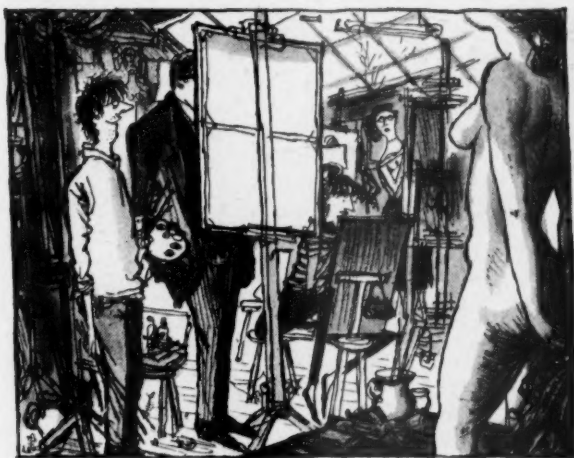
My dead Friends,  
Please look carefully at . . ."

From the Bradford-on-Avon Churchman

Looking.

# The Rake's Progress : The Painter

BY RONALD SEARLE



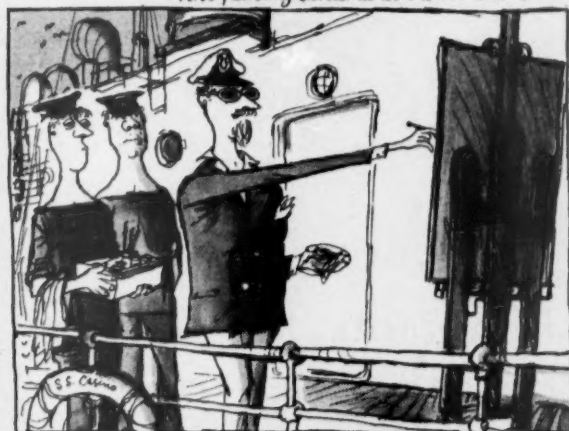
**1. GENESIS** Scholarship to the Royal College of Art. Praised by Mr. Dorrwin.



**2. RECOGNITION** Designs tableau for the Chelsea Arts Ball. First painting exhibited at the Tea Centres.



**3. SUCCESS** Discovers Banana Motif. One-man exhibition (on a banana motif) sells out. Praised by Sir John Rothinstein.



**4. TRIUMPH** Commissioned to paint Lady Docket in gold leaf. Praised by Sir Alfred Mannings.



**5. DOWNFALL** Expelled from the London Group. Paints Lady Mannings' dog. A.R.A.



**6. RUIN** Televised sitting next to Sir Winston at Royal Academy banquet. R.A. Knighted.



"Hey, wait a moment, I've just thought of a wonderful short cut."

## Remnants for Readers

BY R. G. G. PRICE

THE proposal that next year there should be a Sale Week for the book trade—not a matter of remainders here and a sixpenny tray there but a general marking down of wares—should be a godsend to professional humorists, a conservatively-minded class who for half a century or more have filled a couple of columns each Advent with prophecies of the manad frenzies of women faced with textile reductions in Oxford Street or Kensington, sometimes varying the formula slightly by painting the anguish of a man caught in a tug-of-war between two women, each of whom wants the same rep curtains or linoleum booties. A new kind of sale will be a shot in the arm to them. Scarcely able to digest their good fortune, they will describe professors clawing readers to get a Wonder-Packet of Assorted

Westerns, the Borough Librarians of Lambeth and Wandsworth trying to remember the manual of Judo as they attempt to prize each other loose from last year's *Whitaker's Almanack*, the keen book-lovers queueing in the icy dawn, ready to force their way, as soon as the first bolt is drawn, into The Times Book Club or Bumpus's. One can only wish, for their sake, that this is to be an annual event.

Hardly anybody else can make plans in advance. The art of competitive price-cutting is in guessing what the rival retailer will consider a hopeful price. Bookseller A, to use a disguise that cannot be penetrated to anyone's detriment, must take into account not only the value of a book to a willing buyer but what he considers to be the price that Bookseller B will put on it. Psychology,

as well as the coarser varieties of bibliography, comes in here. This system of waiting to chalk up a price until someone else has chalked up one is known as a free-enterprise market, and very entertaining and invigorating it can be at its best.

It is possible that a less rugged and individual method of merchandizing may be adopted. The central authority of the book trade may during the next few months draw up a list of official price-reductions and separate shops put on their honour or otherwise compelled not to undercut this, a system called regimentation when used by the State and co-ordinated individualism when used by a trade association. As the sale will presumably apply to everything on the shelves it will involve the assessment of the current value of tens of thousands of books, an



assessment delicately taking into account both solidity of format and durability of content. This is a formidable enterprise and would undoubtedly require the recruitment of additional staff, chosen equally, one hopes, from criticism and commerce.

Why not just plump for a percentage reduction in the published price, whatever it is? Because the whole idea of a sale is that it should be sensitive not to cost of production but to demand. Blanket or overall reductions might result in a best-seller's being sold well below its top possible price, a horrible thing for any keen bookseller, especially when you consider the number of books that no reduction, however slashing, will sell at all. What the sponsors of this striking scheme are aiming at is the consumer. The producer is assumed to have already made his choice between losing some and losing all of his costs.

The most reliable method of forecasting consumer demand, pollsters tell us, is a poll. If the price-fixers take a sample of the literate public—some simple test will be needed, perhaps construing half a page of Maugham or Balchin—they should be able to hit on sums that the average buyer is likely to be persuaded to pay, what economists call "a fair price."

A difficulty is that the fixed-price sale, in comparison with the auction, tends to be static. In the big January sales, prices are fixed before the doors open and tend to stick, except sometimes in a panic during the last

few hours. Of course, the majority of items in a "white" sale are saleable. This clearly differentiates it from a book sale. Rapid adjustments of prices will be needed during the whole period and at times the atmosphere will be nearer to that of a racetrack, where prices are indeed sensitive barometers, than to that of a bookshop. I mean that it will not be a meditative atmosphere.

Will reputations show odd and temporary fluctuations? I think not. Sometimes the *succès d'estime*, the book that reviewers praise and the readers do not buy, will find a belated sale at a third of the price by which it was originally fenced off from the public, that is all. By and large, *The Cruel Sea* will still be in greater demand than a new German edition of Pindar. Here creative salesmanship will come in. There are two main ways in which retailers have brightened up selling, the mock bargain and block packaging. Book prices will be rising steadily from now on so that smashing reductions become possible without too much strain on publishers. That is simple. Block packaging needs a more subtle approach.

This was invented by the auctioneers, who threw together a watering-can, half a deck-chair, a plaster cast of the Discobolus and a pair of hair-tongs. Now there is still an incongruity between the components of the set, but it will be, as it were, a harmonious incongruity. You take a three-volume history of Persia, a rather frivolous novel about Diocletian, an economic atlas and a

selection from Tennyson. The reader who wants one of them is prepared to pay a little more and get the others too. The bookseller, therefore, does not have to warehouse them. In extreme cases, sets of Hook's *Archbishops of Canterbury* or Thirlwall's *History of Greece* can be disposed of by packaging with one slim Raymond Chandler or Michael Innes.

Economically, and it is primarily with applied economics that we are concerned now, the scheme seems likely to result in whatever is the opposite of deferred buying. Few people give sheets or pillow-cases or cretonnes for presents, but people do give books, and books keep. Christmas presents will be bought ahead. I do not know whether book tokens will be exchangeable against purchases but I suspect not. If they were, of course, the most delightfully elaborate consequences would result. More probably, to give book tokens will be evidence of generosity, a proof that you have paid the full price. The average giver will stock up at the sales.

### Fair Exchange

*Lines inspired by a recent Award at Harvard University . . . in his identity as an American he [Auden] has become a permanent part of American poetry."*

MORE Yankee than the Yank they  
say  
Naturalized Auden's now O.K.  
Come Spender, Lehmann, answer  
them:  
Naturalized Eliot is O.M.

PATRIC DICKINSON

Claudia

### AND SO TO BED



# Statistics and Other Bad News

BY H. F. ELLIS



SOMETIMES, behind the simple sentences of a "news release," it is possible to discern an untold story of conscientious devotion and high-hearted endeavour. And sometimes, not.

Post Office News Bulletin No. 406, recently released by the principal Information Officer, G.P.O. Headquarters, London, leaps, with its final item, emphatically into the first category:

An analysis [it begins without preamble] of the inland telegraph traffic during one week in 1951 showed that 47 per cent of the messages were business and 53 per cent were social.

The business messages included 5.4 per cent dealing with fish and 3.0 per cent dealing with betting.

"Life and Death" messages, other bad news, and condolences, totalled 2.9 per cent.

The thoughtless will pass these figures by with a shrug. Men of insight are more likely to marvel at the careful planning and devoted application that must have gone to their production. The mere physical labour of gathering up the flimsy telegram forms from post offices and sub-post-offices all over the length and breadth of Britain, the bother of doing them up with rubber bands in bundles of fifty, the transport of all this mighty harvest of "Meet me Waterloo 4.30"s and "Unload my

Brazilian 6½ at 92"s to some gigantic central sorting house—these things alone would be enough to quench the ardour of any but a lifelong analyst. And the difficulties of classification! The fact that the results of the 1951 survey have only now been put before the public should convince most people of the complexity of the task. But if any reader still thinks it a simple matter to sort a heap of telegrams into bins marked "Business" and "Social," and then re-divide them under "Fish," "Life and Death" etc., let him at once attempt the following:

## TEST PAPER FOR G.P.O. TELEGRAM ANALYSTS (3rd GRADE)

Candidates must write with crossed nibs on absorbent tissue paper

1. "FLORENCE IN HOSPITAL AGAIN. EXPECT YOU WEEK-END. LOVE. ALBERT." Is this

(a) Bad news? (b) Good news? (c) Social? (d) Anti-social?

2. Bearing in mind that all messages (vide 1951 Survey—47 per cent plus 53 per cent equals 100 per cent) must be either Business or Social, what would you do with this:

"THE WICKED SHALL BE CUT OFF FROM THE EARTH AND THE TRANSGRESSORS SHALL BE ROOTED OUT."—*Handed in at Lambeth 3.27 p.m.*

3. "The public cannot be relied upon to remember the difficulties of the analyst." Discuss this dictum, with special reference to the following example:

"MANAGED GET YOU FOUR TO ONE FRANCASAL AND TWO DRESS-CIRCLES FOR PANTO. SORRY ABOUT SATURDAY. TED."

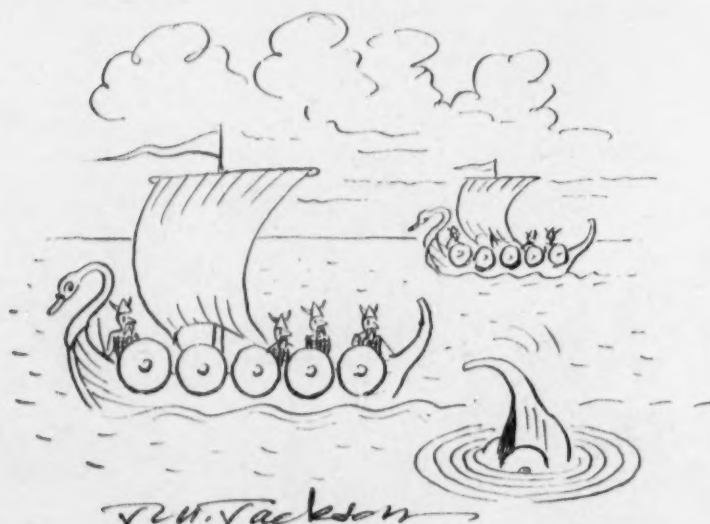
4. (a) How would you deal with bad news about fish?

(b) Classify: "HAVE TWO TONS FROZEN PILCHARDS ON MY HANDS. DEEPLY WORRIED. DAWSON."

5. Say whether you think the six telegrams which will be handed to you by the Invigilator were (a) scratched with an empty ball-point pen on a post-office counter or (b) done with a burnt match-stick while going downhill on horseback.

A glance through this comparatively elementary paper should be enough to encourage the public to try to mend its slapdash ways. The possibility that the Post Office may be at work now on another, more up-to-date analysis should be constantly borne in mind, and may perhaps help to check the indelible pencil, irresolute, over the telegram-form. Was last week, we may well ask ourselves, was the week before that the chosen time for a swoop? Is that well-meant message to your daughter, "Have a good time. Am sending skates," fated to hover indefinitely over the gulf that divides society from fish? Or is this week the one that matters?

We don't know. We shall not know, if the Post Office keeps up its present rate of striking, until sometime in 1957. Meanwhile, the least we can do in the interests of accurate statistical analysis is to write clearly, keep to one subject at a time, and try our best, when laying bets on fish, to do it by telephone.



"NEW CITY COUNCIL SETTLED DOWN WELL"

Headline in the Auckland Star  
Sure they weren't pushed?

PERFUMES



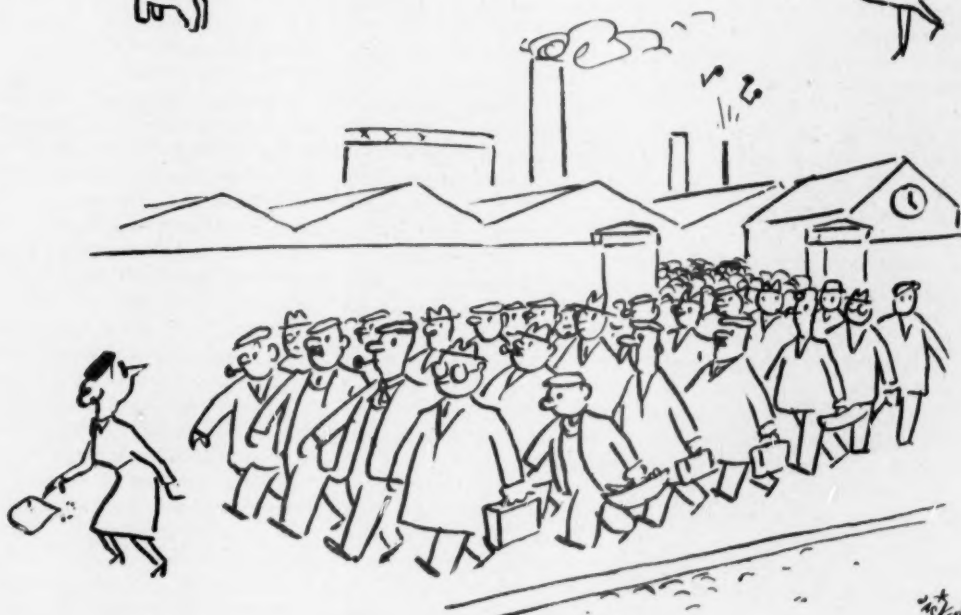
IRRESISTIBLE



PERFUME

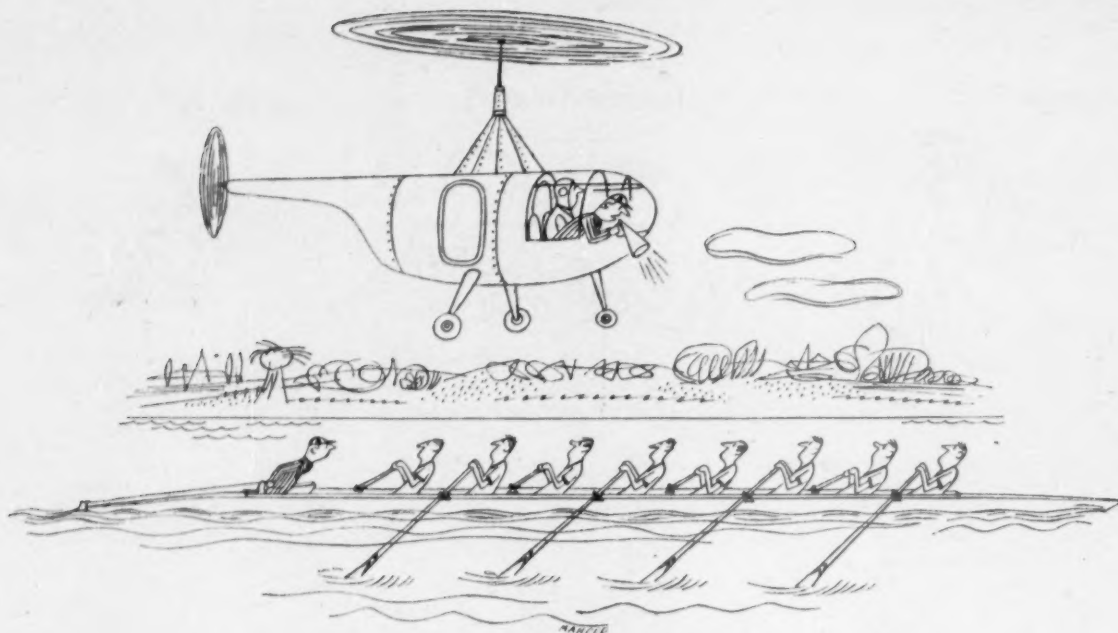


SONS  
IT WORKS



W. H. R.





## Pack My Dance Programmes, Walpole

BY  
LIONEL HALE

**M**Y old man-servant, Walpole, drops in on me from time to time for a chat about the days when I was a man about town and Walpole was the man about me. We read the Court Circular together in the newspaper and any correspondence of interest; and some recent letters to the editor have opened up the flood-gates of reminiscence as he pours me a glass of port.

It was all started by Mr. W. Somerset Maugham, who mentioned, in a birthday broadcast, that in the 1890s the smart young man was accustomed to receive at dances a programme card, with a pencil and a little silk tassel attached, on which he inscribed in advance the names of his dance partners. Further, said Mr. Maugham, this smart young man "took his man" with him on country-house visits.

I cannot go back as far as the 1890s, but both these customs were the breath of daily life to me in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Indeed, one of the reasons I acquired my man-servant, Walpole, in 1930 was that I wanted someone to keep my collection of dance programmes in order.

My London dance programmes

of the period range from Beckenham in the extreme south to Finchley in the desolate north; and many pleasurable hours they recall to me. These cards may have been frowned on in a society in which everyone who was anyone knew everyone who was anyone else. But in the 1920s things were sadly different; and if even the hostess knew half her guests she was considered strangely fortunate. (It was a friend of mine, I recall with blushes, who answered his hostess's effusive "How are you?" with a fervent "How are you? And, what is more important, *who* are you?") These dance programmes were necessary identification cards, forerunners of other such in sterner fields—symbols of a society unclassed, shifting, displaced and suspicious.

Others may muse romantically over the programmes of their youth, recalling the blue eyes of "Natalie: No. 4", or wondering who on earth can have been "Moirá: Nos. 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, Supper, 14, 15, 16 and the Eton Boating Song." My dance

programmes tell a different tale; they record the names or descriptions of the mothers or chaperones of my partners.

The reason was that my partners were, in themselves and seriatim, indistinguishable. Though very rich, I was not, alas, the masterful or alluring young man who would elbow his way to Cynthia or Armored though the tail-coats, take her programme from her only-faintly-reluctant hand, run an amused eye down it, cross out the five names preceding "Supper," substitute my own initials, and return it with a slight, smiling bow. No; I got Mabel and Doris and Joan, doing my duty, and there was nothing to tell them apart, in their tulle or white satin and small strings of legacy pearls. I was bound to find them with Mama. And Mama, her personality having been developed by Time and World War I, came in highly individual and recognizable shapes.

Identified, therefore, maternally on my dance programmes, my partners read something as follows:

No. 4. —

No. 5. —

No. 6. Mrs. Probb (?) Peach-coloured silk, garnets, hair combs

No. 7. *Jet with bugles: pearls cultured but not she*

No. 8. *Spanish shawl, stays firmly near champagne bar*

No. 9. —

No. 10. *Dead spit of Nellie Wallace, in diamonds*

And so on. This system had immense advantages. I have suggested that my partners were not those most generally pursued. One could not bank on some avid contemporary swooping down on them once one's Charleston was over. One was in danger of protracted conversation about Lindbergh and *The Well of Loneliness* over claret cup. But, if one was sure of Mama, one could conveniently and courteously return each identical bundle of tulle or white satin to store. They were sweet girls, and glad to be home.

If I have no records of studio parties in Chelsea, where one "rolled back the rug," or laboured relaxations with the Progressives somewhere off the Gray's Inn Road, or car-borne capers somewhere near Maidenhead, it is because no programmes were issued. Nor was Mama present.

Ah, my gay, cynical youth! Many a laugh my manservant Walpole and I would have about it, as he boot-jacked off my dancing pumps after a Hunt Ball. It was Walpole who, on country-house visits, told me the gossip of the Servants' Hall, and enabled me to see how our civilization was crumbling round us. Mr. A, for instance, though a well-enough known diarist and divorcé, had brought no man with him; and the footman who valeted him reported that his cuff links were of bone, and his shaving soap wrapped in newspaper. Mr. B had, to be sure, brought a man; but he seemed to know nothing about Servants' Hall precedence.

It is a time, too, looking back, when the old order changeth, giving way to country cottages. One's friends were no longer to be found in rural mansions—visits to the stables before Sunday luncheon—but under thatch in Hertfordshire—sallies to the pub for darts. It was unthinkable to leave Walpole in London, with the run of his teeth in pantry and cellar. There was no room for him in the cottage. Walpole stayed

in the nearest four-star hotel, and drove over at dawn.

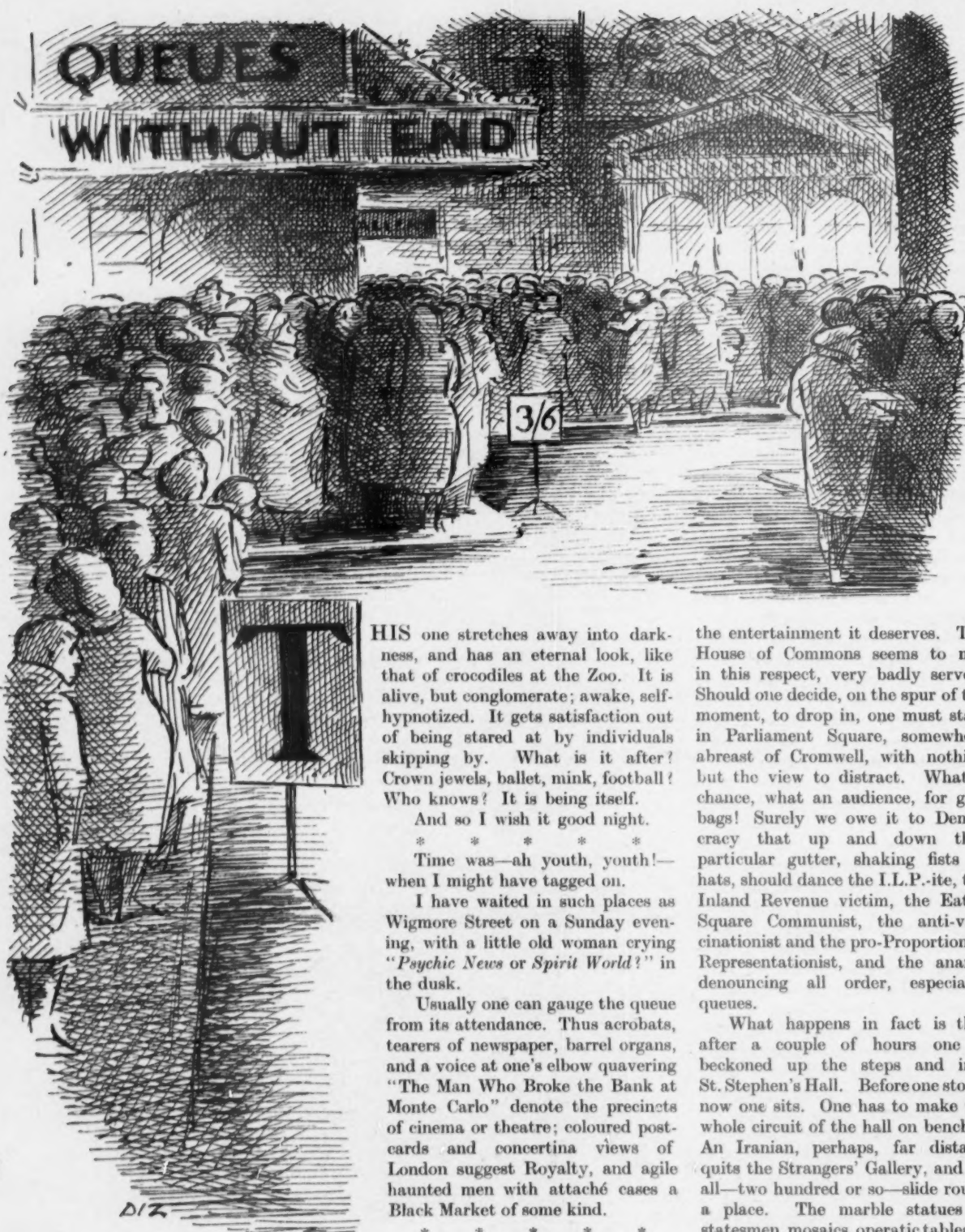
Walpole, of course, had his uses on these visits. One's friends, in an affectation of rusticity forced on them by death duties, used to fling themselves into garden activity. There were lawns to be cut, cabbage patches to be dug, and even wells to be cleaned. They expected one to help. But "Walpole loves this sort of thing," I would say; and after he had shaved me I would watch him from my window as he delved and ditched. It was a pleasure to observe Walpole at, say, Lady A—B—'s ramshackle little cottage in Sussex, polishing the oil-lamps in the evening before driving off to the hotel on Brighton front.

So passed my youth. Nothing now remains of it but a packet of gold-embossed dance programmes, neatly tied and taped in red ribbon by Walpole. Looking back on it, one can see now that the whole situation was bound inevitably to lead to World War II. One is not a snob, one does not repine. One smiles ruefully at Walpole, and asks him to pour another port before he goes.

#### Shortfall

Because of the lack of recruits, the minimum height for Halifax policemen is to be reduced by one inch. Economists are said to be watching with interest this attempt to cure one shortage by creating another.





**T**HIS one stretches away into darkness, and has an eternal look, like that of crocodiles at the Zoo. It is alive, but conglomerate; awake, self-hypnotized. It gets satisfaction out of being stared at by individuals skipping by. What is it after? Crown jewels, ballet, mink, football? Who knows? It is being itself.

And so I wish it good night.

\* \* \* \* \*

Time was—ah youth, youth!—when I might have tagged on.

I have waited in such places as Wigmore Street on a Sunday evening, with a little old woman crying "*Psychic News or Spirit World?*" in the dusk.

Usually one can gauge the queue from its attendance. Thus acrobats, tearers of newspaper, barrel organs, and a voice at one's elbow quavering "*The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo*" denote the precincts of cinema or theatre; coloured postcards and concertina views of London suggest Royalty, and agile haunted men with attaché cases a Black Market of some kind.

\* \* \* \* \*

Not every queue, however, gets

the entertainment it deserves. The House of Commons seems to me, in this respect, very badly served. Should one decide, on the spur of the moment, to drop in, one must start in Parliament Square, somewhere abreast of Cromwell, with nothing but the view to distract. What a chance, what an audience, for gasbags! Surely we owe it to Democracy that up and down that particular gutter, shaking fists or hats, should dance the I.L.P.-ite, the Inland Revenue victim, the Eaton Square Communist, the anti-vaccinationist and the pro-Proportional-Representationist, and the anarchist denouncing all order, especially queues.

What happens in fact is that after a couple of hours one is beckoned up the steps and into St. Stephen's Hall. Before one stood, now one sits. One has to make the whole circuit of the hall on benches. An Iranian, perhaps, far distant, quits the Strangers' Gallery, and we all—two hundred or so—slide round a place. The marble statues of statesmen, mosaics, operatic tableaux from British history hardly come



under entertainment. A secretary may scuttle, an M.P. pass: so one interprets that worn look hopeful of recognition. And this will go on indefinitely so long as there's a flicker of interest upstairs. If there's none, the Strangers' Gallery will empty a little, offering places to be filled. Either way tedium is assured.

\* \* \* \* \*

Not that I'm against queueing: I will shuffle up to margarine counters with the next man, start out-cast beyond bus shelters, glimpse over others' shoulders the last vanishing packet of — cigarettes. This, without question, is the civilized way.

Once there were dog-fights. Now a dog can walk anywhere without fear of being pounced on; and I've no doubt the average dog is better off than he ever was.

I don't have to battle my way on buses with an umbrella or defer to fat women in post offices; and for this I am thankful.

But have I ever sung glees at night round the Oval, been the first—or even the last—to hail Murder at the Old Bailey?

\* \* \* \* \*

One occasion sticks in my memory. It was the spring of '43. Queueing was in the air, and I found myself—over some question of priorities—in a ruly mob extending to and fro far as the eye could see. There was a raid of sorts going on: little did we care.

"What are you here for?" I asked the old woman at my side.

"I lost me identity," said she.

"Oh dear," I said.

Only yesterday she'd had it.

She looked rather scared, but proud. Then a bomb went off, and we all made for shelter. Ten minutes later we had re-formed, as before.

But it wasn't many days before I had lost *mine*, and there I was back at the queue, and whom should I see but the same poor old skrimshanker.

"Good morning," I said, stepping up beside her, "what's the trouble this time?"

"Still me identity," she said, "there's complications."

She smiled. A couple of bombs went off, and then a gas-inspector shoved his nose in, to ask what queues were for, and if I knew, why didn't I keep to them, and so on. Then they all began shoving and elbowing, till I found myself fifty yards further down than I'd started. Great days.

\* \* \* \* \*

It takes six (as the old proverb says) to make a queue, and one to break it.

Beware of the threat from within: the person who worms his way up.

From the outside all queues, even little ones, are disheartening. Encourage ghost queues. Let stools do the waiting. Or why not dogs?

Avoid outpatients, those who queue all they can, queues that aren't sure which way they're going, wrong queues.

Hints to queue-breakers: come running round a corner, shouting

Sinatra; scatter bribes; sing; failing everything, begin reading in loud snuffling tones the novel you have been writing about Life as it flows in and out of and round a street-corner Proust.

When you're fed up with queues, start your own. Stand by a shut door, whisper the magic word, get the thing well going, and then beetle off. In the morning, with any luck, your queue will encircle the block, without end or beginning.

\* \* \* \* \*

I do like a wind!

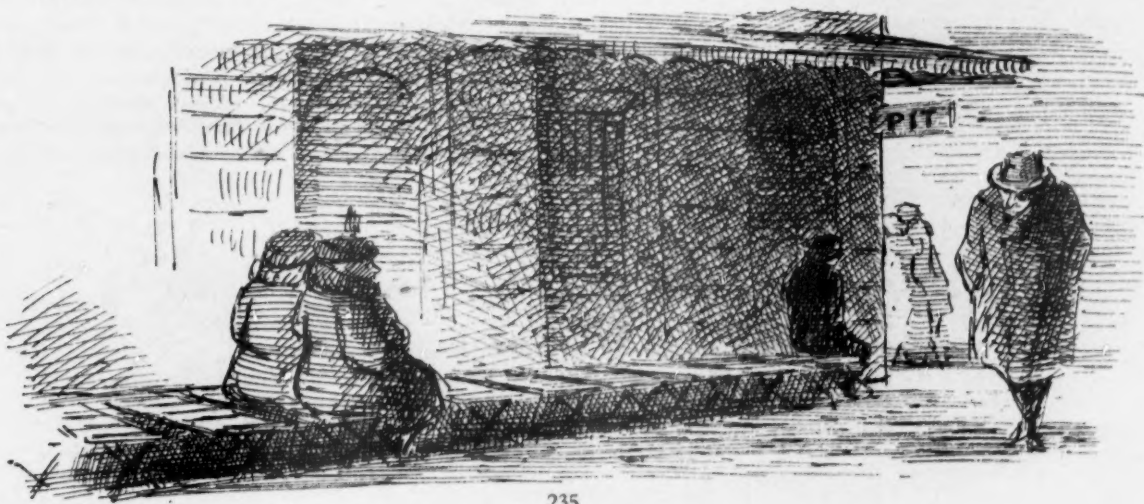
At night I sleep—or wake—the better for it, for the boughs that creak, the dustbins that rattle, the moans in chimneys and charges round corners.

When I get up I may be rather disappointed that there's so little to show: not a chimney down! The houses look just as they did. But then in a window-box I notice the plant convulsively twitching; along the street comes a man—not walking but trudging air. And all through the day I'll be haunted by signs jogging, papers cavorting, the female form beautifully or comically divined, the bowler hat at last bowling away, birds hurling themselves into the current under low tear-away skies.

Then the fun will die down mysteriously as it came. Once more a terrible patience will possess people and things.

I might as well go and "lose me identity" in a queue.

G. W. STONIER



THE news travelled from group to group along the platform of Victoria Station, impressing our parents and kid-sisters almost as much as ourselves. A lord was coming to our prep-school. A real lord. A new boy, only eight years old. Youngest son of the Duke of Rumshire. A new boy, yet a lord.

## Treacle Tart

BY ROBERT GRAVES

Lord Julius Bloodstock. Some name! Crikey!

Excitement strong enough to check the rebellious tears of home-lovers, and make our last good-byes all but casual. None of ~~us~~ having had any contact with the p  rage, it was argued by some, as we settled in our reserved Pullman carriage, that on the analogy of policemen there couldn't be boy-lords. However, Mr. Lees, the Latin Master (declined: *Lees, Lees, Lem, Lei, Lee*), confirmed the report. The lord was being driven to school that morning in the ducal limousine. Crikey, again! *Cricko, Crickere, Crikey, Crictum!*

Should we be expected to call him "Your Grace," or "Sire," or something? Would he keep a coronet in his tuck-box? Would the masters dare cane him if he broke school rules or didn't know his prep?

Billington Secundus told us that his father (the famous Q.C.) had called Thos a "tuft-hunting toad-eater," meaning that he was awfully proud of knowing important people, such as bishops and Q.C.s and lords. To this Mr. Lees turned a deaf ear, though making ready to crack down on any further disrespectful remarks about the Rev. Thomas Pearce, our Headmaster. None came. Most of us were scared stiff of Thos; besides, everyone but Billington Secundus considered pride in knowing important people an innocent enough emotion.

Presently Mr. Lees folded his newspaper and said "Bloodstock,

as you will learn to call him, is a perfectly normal little chap, though he happens to have been born into the purple—if anyone present catches the allusion. Accord him neither kisses nor cuffs (*nec oscula, nec verbera*, both neuter) and all will be well. By the way, this is to be his first experience of school life. The Duke has hitherto kept him at the Castle under private tutors."

At the Castle, under private tutors! Crikey! *Crikey, Crikius, Crikissime!*

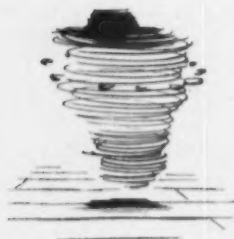
We arrived at the Cedars just in time for school dinner. Thos, rather self-consciously, led a small, pale, fair-haired boy into the dining-hall, and showed him his seat at the end of the table among the other nine new boys. "This is Lord Julius Bloodstock, boys," he boomed. "You will just call him Bloodstock. No titles or other honorifics here."

"Then I prefer to be called Julius," His first memorable words.

"We happen to use only surnames at Brown Friars," chuckled Thos; then he said grace.

None of Julius's table-mates called him anything at all to begin with, being either too miserable or too shy even to say "Pass the salt, please." But after the soup, and half-way through the shepherd's pie (for once not made of left-overs), Billington Tertius, to win a bet, leant boldly across the table and asked: "Lord, why didn't you come by train, same as the rest of us?"

Julius did not answer at first, but when his neighbours nudged him he said "The name is Julius, and my father was afraid of finding newspaper photographers on the platform. They can be such a nuisance. Two of them were waiting for us at the school gates, and my



father sent the chauffeur to smash both their cameras."

This information had hardly sunk in before the third course appeared: treacle tart. To-day was Monday: onion soup, shepherd's pie and carrots, treacle tart. Always had been. Even when Mr. Lees-Lees-Lem had been a boy here and won top scholarship to Winchester. "Treacle. From the Greek *theriace*, though the Greeks did not, of course..." With this, Mr. Lees, who sat at the very end of the table, religiously eating treacle tart, looked up to see whether anyone were listening, and noticed that Julius had pushed away his plate, leaving the oblong of tough burned pastry untouched.

"Eat it, boy!" said Mr. Lees. "Not allowed to leave anything here for Mr. Good Manners. School rule."

"I never eat treacle tart," explained Julius with a little sigh.

"You are expected to address me as 'Sir'," said Mr. Lees.

Julius seemed surprised. "I thought we didn't use titles here, or other honorifics," he said, "but only surnames?"

"Call me 'Sir'," insisted Mr. Lees, not quite certain whether this were innocence or impertinence.

"Sir," said Julius, shrugging faintly.

"Eat your tart," snapped Mr. Lees.

"But I never eat treacle tart—sir!"

"It's my duty to see that you do so, every Monday."

Julius smiled. "What a queer duty," he said incredulously.

Titters, cranings of necks. Then Thos called jovially down the table: "Well, Lees, what's the news your end? Summer holidays reported to have been wearisomely long?"



"No, Headmaster. But I cannot persuade an impertinent boy to sample our traditional treacle tart."

"Send him up here," said Thos in his most portentous voice. "Send him up here, plate and all! Oliver Twist asking for less, eh?"

When Thos recognized Julius, his face changed and he swallowed a couple of times, but having apparently lectured the staff on making not the least difference between duke's son and shopkeeper's son, he had to put his foot down. "My dear boy," he said, "let me see you eat that excellent piece of food without further demur; and no nonsense."

"I never eat treacle tart, Headmaster."

Thos started as though he had been struck in the face. He said, slowly, "You mean, perhaps, 'I

have lost my appetite, sir.' Very well, but your appetite will return at supper time, you mark my words—and so will the treacle tart."

The sycophantic laughter which greeted this prime Thossism surprised Julius but did not shake his poise. Walking to the buttery table, he laid down the plate, turned on his heel, and returned calmly to his seat.

Thos at once rose and said grace in a challenging voice.

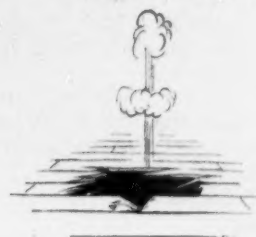
"Cocky ass, I'd like to punch his lordly head for him," growled Billington Secundus later that day.

"You'd have to punch mine first," I said. "He's a... the thing we did in Gray's *Elegy*—a village Hampden. Standing up against Lees and Thos in mute inglorious protest against that foul treacle tart."

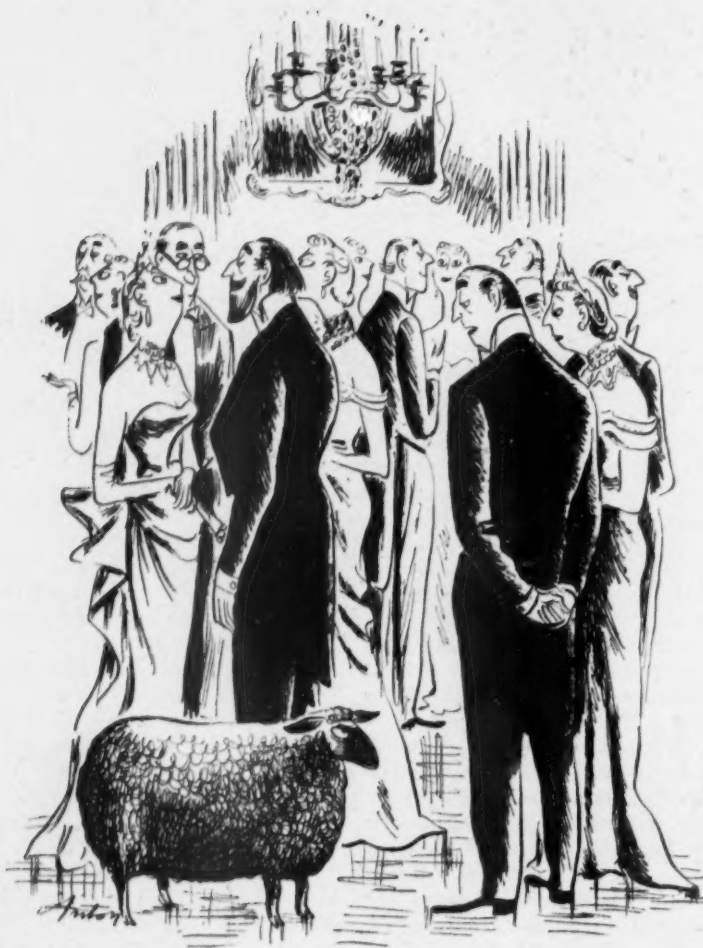
"You're a tuft-hunting toad-eater."

"I may be. But I'd rather eat toads than Thos's treacle tart."

A bell rang for supper, or high







"Perhaps it's lost."

tea. The rule was that tuck-box cakes were put under Matron's charge and distributed among all fifty of us while they lasted. "Democracy," Thos called it (I can't think why), and the Matron, to cheer up the always dismal first evening, had set the largest cake she could find on the table: Julius's. Straight from the ducal kitchens, plastered with crystallized fruit, sugar icing and marzipan, stuffed with raisins, cherries and nuts.

"You will get your slice, my dear, when you have eaten your treacle tart," Matron gently reminded Julius. "*Noblesse oblige.*"

"I never eat treacle tart, Matron."

It must have been hard for him to see his cake devoured by strangers before his eyes, but he made no protest; just sipped a little tea and went supperless to bed. In the dormitory he told a ghost story, which is still, I hear, current in the school after all these years: about a Mr. Gracie (why "Gracie"? ) who heard hollow groans in the night, rose to investigate and was grasped from behind by an invisible hand. He found that his braces had caught on the door knob; and, after other harrowing adventures, traced the groans to the bathroom, where Mrs. Gracie . . .

Lights out! Sleep. Bells for getting up; for prayers; for breakfast.

"I never eat treacle tart." So Julius had no breakfast, but we pocketed slices of bread and potted meat (Tuesday) to slip him in the playground afterwards. The school porter intervened. His orders were to see that the young gentleman had no food given him.

Bell: Latin. Bell: Maths. Bell: long break. Bell: Scripture. Bell: wash hands for dinner.

"I never eat treacle tart," said Julius, as a sort of response to Thos's grace; and this time fainted.

Thos sent a long urgent telegram to the Duke, explaining his predicament: school rule, discipline, couldn't make exceptions, and so forth.

The Duke wired back non-committally: "Quite so. Stop. The lad never eats treacle tart. Stop. Regards. Rumshire."

Matron took Julius to the sick-room, where he was allowed milk and soup, but no solid food unless he chose to call for treacle tart. He remained firm and polite until the end, which came two days later, after a further exchange of telegrams.

We were playing kick-about near the Master's Wing when the limousine pulled up. Presently Julius, in overcoat and bowler hat, descended the front steps, followed by the school porter carrying his tuck-box, football boots and handbag. Billington Secundus, now converted to the popular view, led our three cheers, which Julius acknowledged with a gracious tilt of his bowler. The car purred off; and thereupon, in token of our admiration for Julius, we all swore to strike against treacle tart the very next Monday, and none of us eat a single morsel, even if we liked it, which some of us did!

When it came to the point, of course, the boys sitting close to Thos took fright and ratted, one after the other. Even Billington Secundus and I, not being peers' sons or even village Hampdens, regretfully conformed.

#### **Delicate Balance of International Relations Note**

"Adm. Kichisaburo Nomura said to-day the two-month visit to the U.S., from which he returned this week, convinced him that the Americans are friends of Japan and that Japan should rearm."

*Hong Kong Standard*

## Lament for Mrs. Dale

**D**OGS pull for the park in more of a hurry.  
 Behind a lighter laurel the buses pass.  
 Maddened by the sun, the householders of Surrey  
 Take out mowers and try to cut the grass.  
 Dailies sipping their tea forget to grouse.  
 Life in the home counties quickens its pace:  
 But Mrs. Dale is dying in the great dark house  
 That stands in Portland Place.

It must have been on the most inspired of guesses,  
 Six years ago, when the saga began,  
 That the middle class, strong in its new distresses,  
 Bared its bosom daily to the common man.  
 Something of the *weltschmerz* must have been implicit  
 In the need that cried for Mrs. Dale to exist:  
 But I, who somehow always managed to miss it,  
 Cannot say what I missed.

I cannot say why, or even how, I never  
 Heard a word of the many she had to say.  
 It was not snobbery. I was not trying to be clever.  
 I am wax in the hands of any serial play.  
 I know the motivation of every Archer:  
 I have taken even the *Lawson-Hopes* to my heart:  
 But when the world bewails Mrs. Dale's departure,  
 I stand dry-eyed and apart.

Only if we get, as Mrs. Dale's successor,  
 The common man with his even commoner kin,  
 A family grouped against the kitchen dresser,  
 Waiting for Wilfred Pickles to coom in;  
 I shall know I let her die of neglect merely  
 To let in something still less fit to survive,  
 Cherishing Mrs. Dale dead more dearly  
 Than ever I loved her alive.

P. M. HUBBARD

## PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY



**Monday, February 8**

Sir CHARLES MACANDREW, Chairman of Ways and Means, brought before the House of Commons: Quia Custodiet...? for their formal second reading a sheaf of eighteen Private Members' Bills. Every one of them was met by the sergeant-major's voice of Colonel Wigg crying "Object!" This was presumably his way of making known his desire for a reform in Private Bill procedure.

After Mr. LYTTTELTON, who, it was observed, was looking bronzed and fit, had announced plans for fifteen million pounds' worth of economic development in British Guiana, and been heard with unwonted friendliness, Mr. HARRY CROOKSHANK inaugurated a discussion on the "accountability" of the nationalized industries to Parliament. His party favoured a standing select committee; but Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, voicing the views not only of the Opposition but of the T.U.C. General Council, thought

"the B.B.C. type of inquiry" more appropriate. The debate was conducted mostly with fairness and good sense, though near the end Mr. ERNEST POPPLEWELL insisted that "the Government were determined to make it as difficult as possible for the nationalized industries to be a success" and Mr. GEORGE LINDGREN sounded a familiar note—"I just do not trust the hon. gentlemen opposite to have a select committee for the benefit of those industries."

**Tuesday, February 9**

The House paid an agreeable visit to Cloud Cuckoo Land when Sir RICHARD ACLAND introduced under the ten-minutes

House of Commons: Purchase Tax rule his "Price Control (No. 1): a Bill to reduce the retail price of Surf, Daz, Fab, Persil, Tide and other soap powders, soap substitutes, detergents, etc." Brandishing a fistful of packets, which he had thoughtfully emptied and flattened before entering the House, and speaking with a minimum of punctuation, Sir RICHARD chanted "This one retails at one-and-eleven we propose one-and-seven, this one retails at a shilling we propose tenpence," and so on through his hand. Mr. HARMAR NICHOLLS opposed the Bill, but in spite of him leave was given to introduce it.

What, by the way, did Sir RICHARD do with the contents of his packets? Emptied down the drain, they would generate enough suds to engulf the entire Palace of Westminster.

The major business of the day was the motion to approve the Purchase Tax (No. 1) Order, which deals with the increase in the duty on plastic floor-tiles. By leave of the Speaker, this was debated concurrently with the Opposition prayers to annul the Purchase Tax (No. 2) and (No. 3) Orders, dealing with electric heaters, gold tea-pots, mirrors, dogs with corkscrews sticking out of their stomachs, and so on. The debate was a Whips' Benefit;

Tory after Tory rose to denounce the orders but register their intention of voting for them, while Socialist after Socialist paid tribute to the Chancellor before going out into the Lobby to vote against him. It was an object lesson in controlled loyalty.

**Wednesday, February 10**

Lord AMULREE asked in the Lords if the Government could give particulars of the Tate Gallery's funds, and was assured that the Government had

House of Lords: Whither National Insurance? House of Commons: The Black Pact full confidence in the trustees—"more," added Lord SELKIRK, "than in some of their critics." Then Lord BEVERIDGE gave a scholarly talk on the future of National Insurance, the burden of which was that insurance benefit had failed to keep pace with the cost of living, and that the position was likely to deteriorate further. Lord SELKIRK held out little hope of amelioration.

In the Commons, question-time flared into acrimony as Mr. LINDGREN and Mr. BESWICK developed the theme that the Minister of Transport had given undue consideration to a private firm wishing to operate a freight service across the North Atlantic, at the expense of B.O.A.C. Mr. LENNOX-BOYD, with surging indignation, urged the justice of his actions, and was given a Ministerial cheer as he finally swept out. Conversely, when Mr. LYTTTELTON ended his report on the Lagos conference, he had the unusual experience of being congratulated by Mr. FENNER BROCKWAY.

Under the ten-minutes rule, Mr. MICHAEL FOOT introduced "Price Control No. 2: Bill to reduce the retail price of sparking plugs," a more practical, less diverting measure than No. 1 of the series (for Sir RICHARD ACLAND has promised that there is to be a series.)

The Opposition's motion regretting the Government's failure to consult the cotton industry before entering into the Japanese trade



Sir Richard Acland



agreement was briefly debated in the evening. Mr. REGINALD MAUDLING, the "black pact's" prime negotiator and apologist, expounded its merits and explained away its disadvantages in an able speech that stood up sturdily against Mr. SILVERMAN's attempt to reduce it to an absurdity. As Mancunian members pointed out, however, one thing it cannot stand up against, and that is the emotional reaction of the Lancashire cotton-worker to the word Japan, which for him means unemployment, poverty and suffering; not the ablest academic argument about sterling balances and *entrepôt* trade can overcome that factor. The defeat of this motion should not lull the Government into

the belief that Lancashire will now heave a sigh of relief and return dutifully to its somewhat reduced trade. More cogent forces than economics are concerned.

#### Thursday, February 11

There was a faintly budgetary atmosphere as the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose to answer Question No. 52, from

House of Commons:  
Take-Over Bids

Dr. KING: what representations has he received about the decline in sales because of uncertainty about purchase tax? What concessions would he announce? After gold tea-pots, what? Mr. BUTLER soon dashed the hopes of the optimistic; there would, he said, be no changes "in or before the Budget."

After Nigeria, Mr. LYTTLETON reported on his visit to Northern Rhodesia. "Is the right hon. gentleman aware," asked Mr. FENNER BROCKWAY, "that our disappointment to-day is as severe as our congratulations yesterday were sincere?" With that Johnsonian phrase the *status quo* was firmly re-established.

Mr. ROY JENKINS and Mr. AUSTEN ALBU introduced a resolution calling for a committee of inquiry on "take-over bids," with which was coupled the name of Mr. Clore. Proposer and seconder alike trounced the financial habits of the City with a fire that warmed the hearts of the converted but barely singed hon. Members opposite, whose hearts were in the City. Basically, it seemed, the Socialist objection to this form of transaction was that it was bad for the morale of the working-man to see anyone making large untaxed capital gains—though no one was found to follow up Mr. GEOFFREY STEVENS's suggestion that similar strictures ought therefore to apply equally to pools winnings. Not many years ago, Dr. SUMMERSKILL declined to import Irish cream because those who could not afford it would envy those that could; so evidently jealousy of the haves by the have-nots is recognized as a legitimate motive for Socialist policy. Mr. BUTLER further confused the issue by ranging himself against "all forms of spiv that get something for nothing," which might be taken to mean that he was against successful City operators, pools winners and lucky entrants in vicarage raffles alike. The House denied the supplicants their committee of inquiry,



Mr Reginald Maudling

but Mr. BUTLER assured hon. Members that he was watching the matter.

#### Friday, February 12

As Mr. CHUTER EDE pointed out, a Bill about animals is the easiest kind of Bill for a Private Member to get on to the Statute Book. Lady DAVIDSON, with much feminine charm and most unfeminine brevity, introduced her contribution, a Bill requiring wider use of anaesthetics in operations on animals. Mr. FREDERICK MESSER found it relevant to attack hunting and circuses, and Sir HERBERT WILLIAMS to attack animal welfare societies; but a second reading was obtained by half-past twelve, when Mr. PETER REMNANT rose to move the second reading of his Bill to increase the powers of magistrates in dealing with persistent cruelty to animals.

As there were still the Coroners Bill and the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill to come, the chances looked slim for Mr. FRED MULLEY's Pools Bill. But no: it was reached by twenty to three, and was debated at a gallop till two minutes to four, when a second reading was jubilantly obtained.

B. A. YOUNG



"I can stand on my own legs."—Mr. Butler



*Dr. Johnson holds a Press Conference*



## BOOKING OFFICE

### Educating Aldous

The Doors of Perception. Aldous Huxley. Chatto and Windus, 6/-

**T**HIS essay describes the effect on the author of taking mescaline, the active principle of peyotl, a drug derived from the cactus. Mexican Indians have used peyotl for centuries. This drug is said to change the consciousness powerfully, but at the same time to have no poisonous effects, and to form no habit in the taker. It is now suggested that there is a close chemical similarity between mescaline and adrenalin; and, accordingly, to quote Mr. Aldous Huxley, "each one of us may be capable of manufacturing a chemical, minute doses of which are known to cause profound changes in consciousness."

Before going further it is perhaps worth remarking—a point not mentioned by Mr. Huxley—that, at a much lower level, the characteristics attributed to mescaline are also to some extent true of the Mexican drink, tequila, itself a product of the cactus. Tequila (unfortunately unobtainable in this country) is drunk as an aperitif, to the accompaniment of a taste of salt and lemon. It gives a "lift" of somewhat limited duration without later intoxication: just the thing for starting a luncheon party, for example. Tequila is, of course, often mixed with other ingredients to make a stronger drink, and no doubt very excessive potations of tequila alone might have bad results. It does, however, serve as an illustration of the curious properties of the cactus.

Mr. Huxley points out that it is not only important to see ourselves as others see us but also to see others as they see themselves. It seems virtually certain, he says, that he will never feel like Sir John Falstaff or Joe Louis. Would some form of hypnosis make this change in him possible? It is an attractive idea, and we follow the experiment with excitement.

Those who feel that something rather risky is going to be attempted should remember that

Mr. Huxley himself is essentially a puritan. He has some severe things to say about drinking and smoking, for example, in this essay. The reader can therefore feel perfectly safe in the assumption that no guilty pleasure will be involved. The worst that can happen is that Mr. Huxley



may derive a little intellectual excitement; and he is, after all, well equipped to keep even that dissipation within reasonable bounds.

"Most takers of mescaline experience only the heavenly part of schizophrenia. The drug brings hell and purgatory only to those who have had a recent case of jaundice, or who are suffering from periodical depressions or a chronic anxiety. If, like the other drugs of remotely comparable power, mescaline was notoriously toxic, the taking of it would be enough, of itself, to cause anxiety. But the reasonably healthy person knows in advance that, so far as he is concerned, mescaline is completely innocuous, that its effects will pass off after eight or ten hours, leaving no hangover and consequently no craving for a renewal of the dose. Fortified by this knowledge, he embarks on the experiment without fear—in other words, without any predisposition to convert an unprecedentedly strange and other than human experience into something appalling, something actually diabolical."

To find out what happened to the maker of this experiment the book must, of course, be read. It would be unfair to pick out its conclusions, separating them from the running commentary. One thing, however, seems quite clear. Mr. Huxley did not become Sir John Falstaff or Joe Louis; he remained, very essentially, Mr. Huxley. What, for example, could be more like himself than to remark, when shown, under the influence of the drug, a reproduction of Cézanne's self-portrait, wearing a large straw hat: "It's like Arnold Bennett in the Dolomites." His other reactions were equally characteristic. The colours around him were heightened in their range; such designs as the folds of material in pictures gained an infinite subtlety. Yet, at the same time, he writes: "Art, I suppose, is only for beginners, or else for those resolute dead-enders, who have made up their minds to be content with the ersatz of Suchness, with symbols rather than with what they signify, with the elegantly composed recipe in lieu of actual dinner."

Speaking as a dead-enders of the most resolute sort, it seems to me that Mr. Huxley, after his shot of mescaline, ran tremendously fast only to find himself standing in the same place. In fact, perhaps Alice was really in Mescaline-land, or Through the Cactus. Certainly the manner of looking at life, here analyzed, is apparent from almost the earliest of Mr. Huxley's writing. Unfortunately Messrs. Chatto and Windus do not enclose a mescaline sample (at least not in review copies), so that it is not at present possible to make further comment from personal experience. ANTHONY POWELL

### Amazon Journey

Jivaro. Bertand Flomoy. Elek, 15/-

This account of a French expedition to the Headhunters of the Upper Amazon is much too short: it is quite untrue that a short book is necessarily more readable than a long one. The writer, an ethnographer and student of primitive rites, is brave and learned but





"Perhaps you realize now what Jardine had to put up with."

he lacks the art of compressing an adventure into a few pages. When he does get away from the bare bones of the narrative, especially in the long account of the head-shrinking ceremonies, he grips the attention immediately.

In a solid, Victorian travel book we should have felt we were battling on with the expedition every foot of the way, suffering with them when food ran low or when the rivers overturned rafts or when the insects brought disease instead of merely intolerable discomfort, rejoicing when a newly-discovered tribe agreed to co-operate and be watched. However, jungle and river and primitive behaviour are so interesting in their own right that even a couple of hundred pages about them of no particular distinction are bound to be enjoyable. R. G. G. P.

**In Love.** Alfred Hayes. Gollancz, 10/6

This short American novel describes the course of a love affair. The two main characters belong to that world of rootless beings who provide a good deal of material for such studies. Mr. Alfred Hayes has a curt, clear-cut, highly conventionalized style which serves him well in a story of this sort, but he never gets quite far enough beneath the surface in describing the three-cornered relationship. The narrator is in love with a divorcee who loves him spasmodically, but is taken from him by a richer man.

There is much parade of objectivity of approach and tough realization of what human emotions are like; but in the end we are left with the self-pity of the characters themselves. All the same, *In Love* is an effort to do something extremely difficult and deserves commendation even when it does not achieve complete success. A. P.

**When Men Had Time to Love.** Agnes de Stoeckl and Wilfrid S. Edwards. Murray, 21/-

This book has two authors, which may explain why it is at once sentimental and heartless, worldly and very

naïve. Some chapters are about the Empress Eugénie; some are about life in Paris during and after the Imperial reign. There is not always a manifest connection between one chapter and another, or even between one sentence and another. However, the book does achieve a certain uniformity of style and pace, the one slapdash, the other slow.

"Immorality," we are told, "is too weak a word to describe the life of some of the well-known artists and poets of Montmartre and the Quartier Latin." Yet other words the authors use are seldom less weak—or less hackneyed. The picture of Eugénie is intimate, affectionate, and tactless: "The Empress," at one point, "is far away in her thoughts, perhaps a little jealous—where is her husband? She does not really care now, but still it is a tiresome feeling to think that he is just killing himself." Only "tiresome"? "Immorality", by comparison, seems a very strong word indeed. M. C.

**Fortune's Favourite.** The Life and Times of Franz Lehár. W. Macqueen-Pope and D. L. Murray. Hutchinson, 21/-

This attractive book—so well written that even a cast list sounds like a fanfare—is not a full biography but rather a distant view of Lehár's life and music, with the telescope of Macqueen-Pope's personal memories bringing up in strong detail the landscape surrounding the appearance of his operettas in England.

The London that saw the unknown Lily Elsie and Joseph Coyne in *The Merry Widow* at Daly's in 1907 might glitter, but its glitter was solid Edwardian gold, and its great opera performances attracted the finest artists in the world—the De Reszkes, Caruso, Calvé and the rest. *The Widow* was neither opera nor musical comedy in the Daly's tradition, and George Edwardes put it on against heavy criticism from all sides (he was even darkly reminded of Tony Weller's warning re "vidders"). But its

wonderful music and the dramatic and logical story, more clearly told than usual on the lighter musical stage, speedily added England to the world of which Lehár was already king.

J. D.

**Life Among the Savages.** Shirley Jackson. Michael Joseph, 10/6

This is much more tautly written than the average American account of bringing up a husband and children: on the other hand, even less happens in it than usual. The house in the country does not need much reconstruction and the neighbours are so normal as to be invisible. It can be recommended to any reader who has not met many of the family reminiscences that have been flowing across the Atlantic like a more tepid Gulf Stream.

Once I had got over the feeling, "Another one that is not as funny as Ruth McKenney," I began to enjoy it for its writing and for the snatches of the children's conversation. It has the added interest of being a product of the brilliant and disturbing mind that wrote *The Lottery* and *Hangsamen*. One listens for uncomfortable undertones amid the prattle; but the screw is never turned. An odd book to come from so original a writer, but a pleasant and readable specimen of its class.

R. G. G. P.

**The Story of Cutlery.** J. B. Himsworth. Ernest Benn, 42/-

Mr. Himsworth's family has been in the cutlery business for over two centuries and Mr. Himsworth himself since he was fifteen—and Sheffield cutlery at that. He glances backwards, it is true, to flint knives and outwards, briefly, to such foreign parts as Germany and London; but his real subject is Hallamshire, from the medieval water-mills on the Don and Sheaf to the mass-produced stainless stuff of to-day.

To the layman the attraction of this book lies in the technical detail and in the illustrations, which are full of the breath-taking elegance of well-made utensils. (There is a photograph of fourteen pairs of scissors which I

### The Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables

THE Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables, Putney, intends to mark its centenary this year with a campaign to raise £100,000.

The Hospital is outside the State scheme, and its existing funds are becoming inadequate to meet steeply rising costs.

*Punch* commends this cause to its charitable readers. The Treasurer's office is at the Hospital, West Hill, London, S.W.15.

should like to hang on the wall of my room.) And there is the familiar struggle between regret at the extinction of superb traditional skills and relief at the extinction of old miseries. Why was such perfect work done when the craftsman worked a sixty-one hour week and when "accumulations of stone dust taken from a grinder's lungs at a *post mortem* were sometimes as large as small pearl barley"?  
P. M. H.

**The War in France and Flanders, 1939-40.** Major L. F. Ellis. *H.M.S.O.*, 37/6

**North-West Europe, 1944-5.** John North. *H.M.S.O.*, 10/6

With an unreliable ally on each flank, with the timid Gamelin initially in supreme command and then the dilatory, indifferent Weygand, with the War Office issuing orders based on inadequate information and the Defence Ministry orders based on a conception of the campaign in terms of the Duke of Marlborough, Lord Gort's British Expeditionary Force fought with a courage and initiative seldom equalled. Their campaign is excellently presented in this second volume of the official war history. The high-level conduct of the war is lucidly examined, and the fighting itself described with just enough detail to keep the account alive. The book is faultlessly produced, and there are ample maps and photographs.

The latest of the Stationery Office's brief war histories is an account of the campaigns of 21 Army Group. The author calls it "dispassionate," but luckily he is wrong; the heroic story is, after a tedious start, heroically told. (It is not even uncontentious, for it rates Hitler above his generals as a strategist.) For those who have not the time for the full-length history, this is an admirable series. B.A.Y.

**The Pattern of Communist Revolution.** Hugh Seton-Watson. *Methuen*, 25/-

Professor Seton-Watson's book has been assailed by most "objective" observers of the Communist scene as a deplorable effort to transpose the Cold War atmosphere into the field of academic research. The alarm, and indeed the anger, of the academic neutralists is justified: a few books like *The Pattern of Communist Revolution* might well demolish the quite unfounded and dangerous belief that it is possible to describe the rise of Communism "fairly" and "in absolute detachment." The vast army of "objective" critics of Communism have done more to enhance the prestige of the Moscow dictatorship than all Communist paid agitators and open propagandists put together.

What a relief to find an authority

with Professor Seton-Watson's reputation who is not afraid to describe slave labour camps as slave labour camps and who is not ashamed to point out that the imperfections of Western society cannot and should not be equated with the horrors of Communism.  
M. P.

## AT THE PLAY

*Angels in Love* (SAVOY)

*Alice Through the Looking Glass* (PRINCES)

*Charley's Aunt* (NEW)

As a child one often prayed that Lord Fauntleroy might be engulfed in boiling jam. That justice miscarried is the sad lesson of Mr. HUGH MILLS' *Angels in Love*. This shows the little beast grown up, still tied to his mother's apron strings, and still abysmally innocent, until a walk in the park with a well-wishing widow quoting the habits of bees and flowers takes his education a trifle farther than was intended. Thus the nursery idyll is at last shattered, and Fauntleroy gets an earldom, a fortune and a wife.

Luckily the piece has enough wit and surprise to survive production in two separate styles. Fauntleroy's awakening, handled with a judgment and taste that only occasionally falter, is the more effective for being taken straight; when that jest thins, we switch to burlesque, with a pompous doctor and a highbrow assassin played amusingly by HENRY KENDALL and PETER REYNOLDS, but almost in the vein of revue. The patchwork result is saved, if narrowly, by invention, and

provides such good scenes as a full-dress Victorian proposal and the murder, at a Wilde tea-party, of Fauntleroy's grandfather, a magnificent old tyrant turned to notable account by KYNASTON REEVES. Fauntleroy himself is cleverly played by PETER HAMMOND as an aristocratic wolf-child, BARBARA KELLY makes a gracious Mrs. Errol (though of sterner stuff than I remember her), and MAXINE AUDLEY allows the widow so much sense and charm that her love for the preposterous murderer is utterly unaccountable. I don't think the Savoy will need a new play for some time.

Look up the Tenniel drawing of Alice sitting between the two Queens, and there on the left is MARGARET RUTHERFORD. Her White Queen, fluttering with moonbeam futility and catching in her voice and eyes a kind of vegetable astonishment, is one of the two major triumphs of this new production of *Alice Through the Looking Glass*. The other is MICHAEL DENISON's White Knight, a gentle and wonderfully dignified creature of inspired melancholy, whose recitation of the Aged Aged Man goes very near the heart of Carroll. There are also minor triumphs in TOBY ROBERTSON's production of FELICITY DOUGLAS's adaptation, the chief perhaps that every now and then a whiff of pure Carroll comes across to confound those who, like myself, still cannot believe that his magic is for the stage; and not the least of these achievements is BINNIE HALE's Red Queen, tight-mouthed but not so intimidating as the original, CAROL MARSH's Alice (much nicer than



Red Queen—MISS BINNIE HALE

White Queen—MISS MARGARET RUTHERFORD

White Knight—MR. MICHAEL DENISON

Dinah's mistress), the garden scene, with WALTER CRISHAM a redoubtable tiger-lily, the Tweedles of MICHAEL DENISON and GRIFFITH JONES, and the latter's bored and monocled Red Knight.

MISS DOUGLAS has added lyrics and introduced the Eton Boating Song, but has avoided the vulgarization which sank Disney. In fact she has gone out of her way to be faithful. Many of KENNETH ROWELL's dresses are lovely, and his sets improve after a shaky start. Why then did one come away feeling that a gallant attempt had, all in all, resulted only in very mild entertainment? I suppose because Alice was written for private and personal enjoyment, and for that one's own mind is still the best place.

It's time managers heard of school terms. In the Christmas holidays, when the theatre was singularly unhelpful, Alice would have been a godsend; and the same is true of *Charley's Aunt*. Here again one doubts if the result is worth such a great expenditure of talent, for although JOHN GIELGUD's production is finished to the last detail (and gives JOHN MILLS as Babs the time of his life), the elaboration slows down a farce which has been considerably more lethal when its presentation was rougher, but faster. Also, it strains for laughs—e.g. Babs, the soul of courtesy, emptying the entire salad bowl on his plate at lunch. But if it is all a little too self-conscious to roll us in the aisle, it is still good fun. JOHN MILLS, nimble and insubordinate, is in his element; and—a very curious thing—we find a character who has actually matured in Kitty, whose soulful acceptance of the degradation of washing up now becomes the biggest laugh of the evening. GWEN FFRANGCON-DAVIES brings an exquisite poise, not often seen in farce, to the real Donna Lucia, on both sides of the Fiftieth Parallel the rest of the cast is good, and MOTLEY have spread themselves on elegant Victoriana.

#### Recommended

Three musicals: *Gypsy and Dolls* (Coliseum), a stinging slice of Damon Runyon, *The King and I* (Drury Lane), gentler but charming, and *The Boy Friend* (Wyndham's), a skilful pastiche of musical comedy in the '20s.

ERIC KEOWN



#### AT THE PICTURES

*They Who Dare*  
*The Weak and the Wicked*

LIKE so many war films, *They Who Dare* (Director: LEWIS MILESTONE) is essentially just a length of war-time experience, given a spurious aesthetic validity (in other words, provided with limits as a "story") by

the fact that it is an account of a particular action, beginning with the preparations for it, tracing the difficulties that arose, and ending—or at least finding a climax—with its success.

It deals with a sort of Commando raid on the island of Rhodes in 1942, and the principal character is the Lieutenant (DIRK BOGARDE) who leads the raid. He is in fact the principal character of the film merely because he is the leader, and that sums up its limitations. He is not established as an individual, and the attempt at the end to work up an emotional situation depending on the clash of character, when he and his sergeant (DENHOLM ELLIOTT) are the only two exhausted survivors, is made with so little preparation that the point fails to get over and merely seems out of key.

But one should, to be fair, take the thing as a straightforward account of an authentic episode, or one that might be authentic; and from that point of view the perfunctory characterization and the pedestrian dialogue don't matter. Given a story of men in action in the open, Mr. MILESTONE will present it admirably; for the men to seem real people the writer must have given him something to work on, and here that has not been done.

Nevertheless the place, and the action (in the sense of incident), are satisfactory enough. One feels the air of this Greek island, and the moments

was to include a decorative girl and a scene of revelry because there was no place for these useful box-office ingredients in the essential story—and there is a great deal of irritatingly conventional comic relief, provided according to the time-honoured formula by endearingly amusing other ranks and foreigners. It's not a boring picture, but it's scrappy and unsatisfying and unworthy of Mr. MILESTONE.

*The Weak and the Wicked* (Director: J. LEE-THOMPSON) is an extraordinary mess. Ostensibly founded on JOAN HENRY's *Who Lie in Gaol*, and written with her collaboration, it makes a half-hearted attempt to present a serious picture of the details of life in a women's prison; but it goes to incredible lengths to attract a popular audience. It makes the error, in fact, of trying to widen the appeal of a not very agreeable subject by inserting at intervals episodes of farce completely out of place in any such treatment of it.

These come in flashbacks, as the stories of one or two of the other prisoners encountered by the principal character (GLYNIS JOHNS). One is pure *Arsenic and Old Lace*, another is an exaggerated anecdote of a shoplifting family that belongs in a Norman Wisdom comedy. Such cynically slapdash methods of wooing the crowd (and the publicity, the tone of which is summed up by the crudely ribnudging phrase "Women . . . barred



Sergeant Corcoran—DENHOLM ELLIOTT

[*They Who Dare*

of suspense are effectively handled, both on the island itself and on the submarine approaching it. Visually, atmospherically, the picture is quite memorable. But there is a pointless opening scene—pointless as far as the structure of the whole is concerned, though in fact I suppose the point

from men!") are enough to sicken you with the whole thing.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The most notable new one in London is the French prizewinner



*Le Salaire de la Peur*, advertised as *The Wages of Fear*. *The Moon is Blue* (20/1/54) and *M. Hulot's Holiday* (25/11/53) continue; both I have recently seen again with enjoyment.

Of the releases, the only one reviewed here is *The Band Wagon* (20/1/54), a very entertaining musical.

RICHARD MALLETT



## AT THE OPERA

*Werther* (SADLER'S WELLS)

THE tale, after Goethe, is small, sad and sickly. Charlotte marries Albert, and Werther shoots himself in poetic despair. At the Wells we see and hear him do this, after a deal of pantomime, during prelude music to the finale.

Dramatically this is an improvement on the score which, in deference to French taste in the 'nineties, has the shooting happen before curtain-up. The *coup de pistolet* was a point that worried Massenet from the start. Mr. ARUNDELL, the present producer, makes no bones about it. And he is right to rub suicide in. Werther himself is loquacious on the subject. His monologue in defence of self-destruction towards the end of Act Two, although pure sophistry, is the psychological pivot of the piece. It has a subtle morbidity unmatched in operatic literature.

This page, and most others that fell to him, was handsomely sung by Mr. ROWLAND JONES, partnering a Charlotte (Miss JANET HOWE) who, while not in her best voice at the outset, did justly by the crucial opening of Act Three, where she broods and wrings her hands over Werther's letters.

The music as a whole, indeed, came over well (my compliments to Mr. ROBERTSON, who conducted), a matter for some relief, since in *Werther* the music's very much the thing, a reconciling and consolatory element in which the morbidity of the book almost dissolves away. Massenet is still wide of average English taste, as witness the smallish turn-up for this revival; but here, certainly, is a score worth living with. There is much more than *article-de-Paris* scent and sweetness in it.

Carvalho said Massenet's music had turned Werther into a Frenchman. The case can be argued the other way round. In his farewell scene with Charlotte the poet touches the books they once read together, then turns to the pistols. The music here takes on grave tinctures from Schumann, Schubert, Brahms. Massenet is not cribbing. Momentarily he assumes not only a Teutonic style but also a Teutonic soul. Carvalho knew nothing about this, of course. He was only an opera director.

CHARLES REID



"Have you tried any of these petrols with new additives for extra zip?"



## AT THE GALLERY

*Petworth Pictures and a Recent Collection*

A GROUP of thirty-five pictures from the famous Petworth House Collection with an accompaniment of precious objects and furniture from the same source is being shown at Messrs. Wildenstein's Galleries at 147 New Bond Street for the benefit of the National Trust. (Closes March 6.)

The conglomeration is made up from a diversity of schools and contains works of widely differing degrees of importance, from the imposing marble head by Praxiteles, and the large, princely Claude Lorrain landscape, or the Bellotto of the Capitol in Rome, to the cheerful "view of a fête in Petworth Park," by Witherington, a nineteenth-century Royal Academician. Beneath the pictures stand Dutch, French, and Venetian furniture, and on view (as well as some silver objects, candlesticks and caskets) is the illuminated manuscript of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. The general effect, apparently unstudied, is both rich and happy. Turner, whose massed works at the Tate Gallery are inclined to overwhelm by weight of numbers, is here represented to advantage by four oils only, all executed about 1830 for the third Lord Egremont, then owner of Petworth.

At the Tate Gallery is Mrs. Pleydell-Bouverie's Collection, started in 1940, consisting of nearly forty small, mainly nineteenth-century French pictures. It will at the present time be considered conservative in taste, and will certainly fail to attract those fashionable addicts of the latest thing "who have got past Impressionism." For unjaded palates still able to profit from the work of Jongkind, Monet, Pissarro, Sisley or Degas, a visit to this exhibition will be rewarding. (Closes April 25.)

In addition to the names mentioned, Mrs. Pleydell-Bouverie's landscapes by Courbet and Cézanne, her well-known Manet seascape with figures on the foreshore, and two enchanting pieces by the unashamed satellite of Manet, Berthe Morisot, will be the envy of many amateurs. Others may consider as the gem of the collection the small Corot portrait, painted with that unselfconscious candour and directness which it has taken posterity to appreciate at its true worth.

### Recommended

At the Lefevre Gallery, 30 Bruton Street, W.1. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century French paintings, a fine mixed show, including Delacroix, Renoir (bronzes), Matisse, Vuillard, Utrillo, etc.

ADRIAN DAINTRY

## ON THE AIR

Wisdom

I HOPE that Norman Wisdom will not take too much notice of the many critics who have written him off as a mere tumbler: his immediate and enormous success a year or two ago invited trouble from the professional iconoclasts and was bound in the long run to provoke the ant-hill of denigrators. It was ever thus. At the height of his powers Tommy Handley had to put up with more criticism than any other radio comic, and Chaplin has always divided the world into helpless fans and bitter critics. The penalty of public success is that one's detractors accumulate almost as swiftly as one's admirers. Let all hopefuls of sound and sight radio remember this when they read harsh words in this column.

Wisdom is a tumbler, admittedly. His antics in *Sinbad the Sailor on Ice* the other night were alarming to watch: he crashed into barriers, pillars and the Empress Hall generally with such brutal, almost masochistic, violence that I feared for his life and limb. He is so enthusiastic, so obviously enthusiastic, that he would cheerfully dive into a saucer of water from the top of the Eiffel Tower—the audience suspects—if he thought that such self-destruction would amuse. He is a tumbler who enjoys tumbling, and while he is still young enough and fit enough to delight us with such strenuous fooling let him get on with it.

But Norman Wisdom is much more than a tumbler: he is a great clown. His sense of comedy is apparent in every line of his perky, mobile features,



[*Sinbad the Sailor on Ice*]  
Mr. Norman Wisdom as Norman and Miss Diana Grafton as Mrs. Sinbad

in his walk, his trot, his sprint and his exuberant mime. He has a pleasing mellow voice, but like Chaplin he is funnier when he restricts his vocal effort to laughter, sobs and gibberish. He is not, like Arthur Askey, a brilliant improviser, but given appropriate material he will out-run even Gordon Pirie in his eagerness to please. He is, of course, the gamin, the eternal street arab, tough, truculent, fiercely independent, irresponsibly crazy when pleased and helplessly tearful when dejected. With his Jackie Coogan cap and tight two-piece suit (most comics of diminutive stature envelop themselves in outsize clobber) he looks like an unemployed billiards-marker, or perhaps like Tenniel's Frog-footman.

On ice his exploits are necessarily cruder, broader than in the television studio. He doesn't need ice. He is at his best in close-up, trying to tell a funny story without laughing, eating a stale bun, wrestling with a piano or merely strutting. He may develop his talents and become another Chaplin

or he may remain what he is, a delicious fool.

Oh dear! After all the fine talk about the B.B.C.'s sense of mission, its guiding paternal hand, its quiet unceasing propaganda for "uplift" and culture, television has sponsored palmistry! Yes, in the last edition of that dreadful show "Quite Contrary" (which gets worse) we were treated to a long and suffocating account by one of the world's masters. There was an American film "proving" that the expert had predicted accurately the fate of Hitler and Mussolini and the triumph of Churchill, and there was a studio séance in which the same expert outlined his

methods, examined the hand of a speechless Duchess of Rutland and showed us exactly why some are born great and some have failure thrust upon them.

If the TV audience is as gullible as the researchers make out then this distasteful programme must have done incalculable harm. It is bad enough when commercial newspapers print astrological piffle for the weak-minded: it is infinitely worse when a public corporation bestows respectability on such dangerous chiromancy. The programme was treated seriously, almost reverently, throughout: there were no laughs, no doubts. "This line," said the expert, "indicates that Bob Hope knows how to time his gags. This mark shows that Toscanini had to be a great musician."

So far there hasn't been a word from the churches about this programme. Can it be that they are prepared to take sponsored fortune-telling lying down?

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

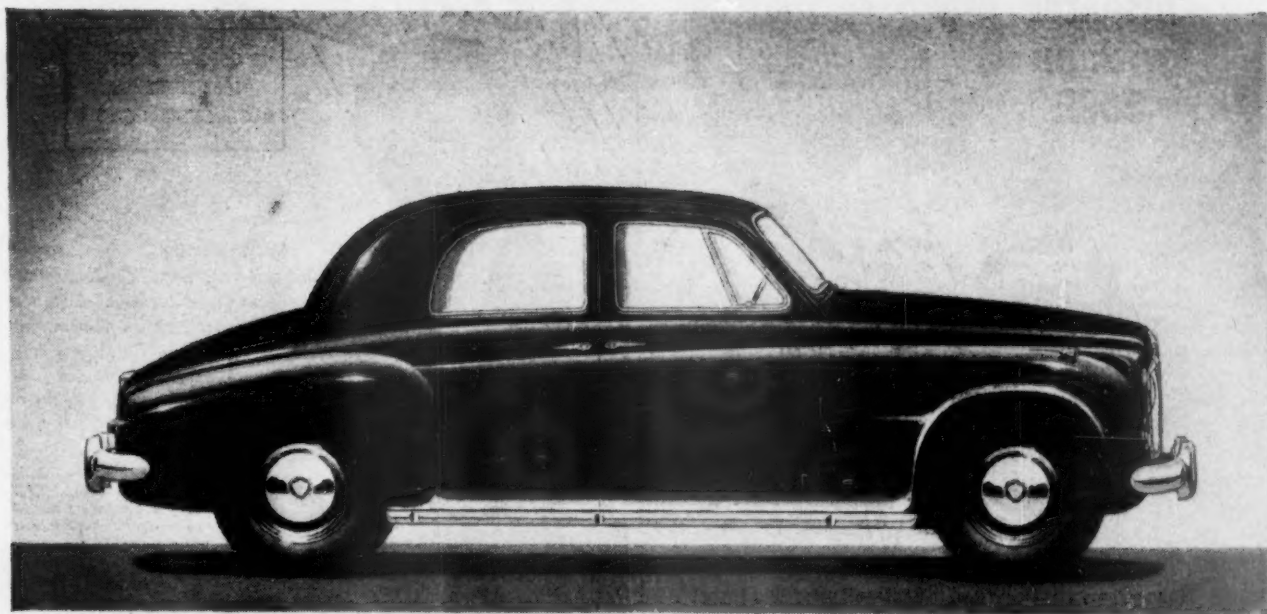


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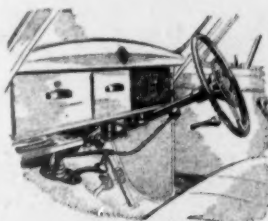


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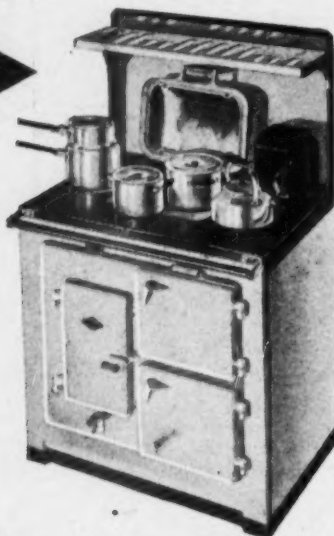
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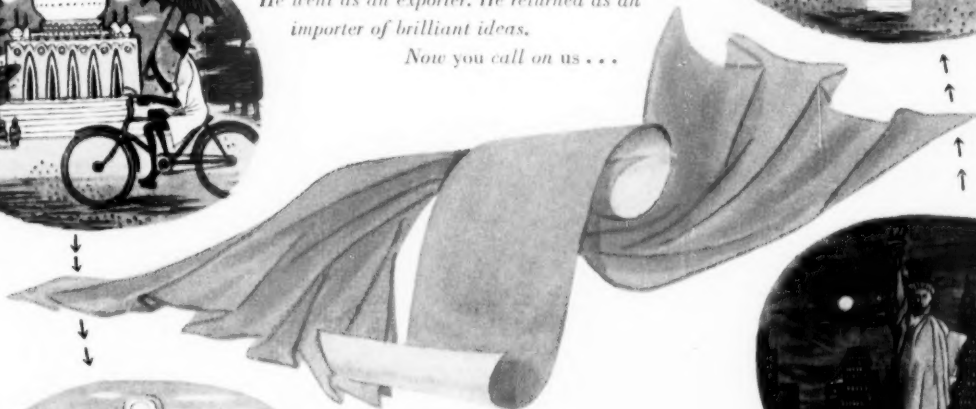


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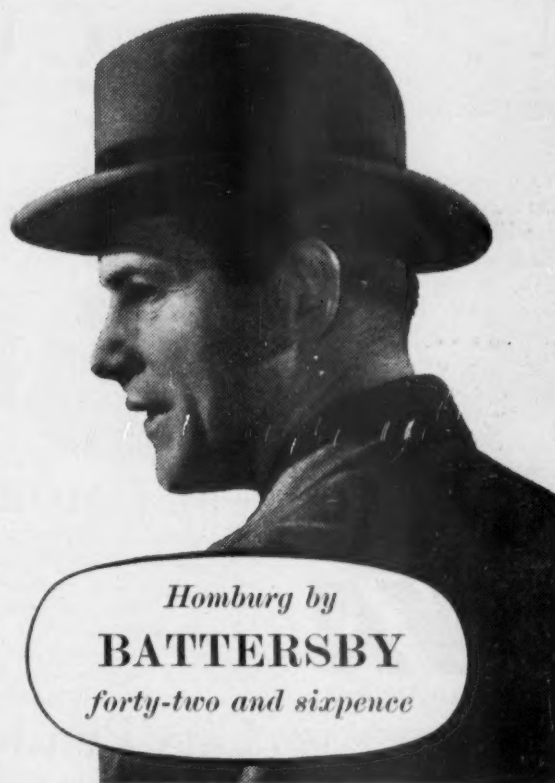
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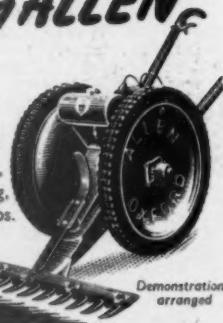
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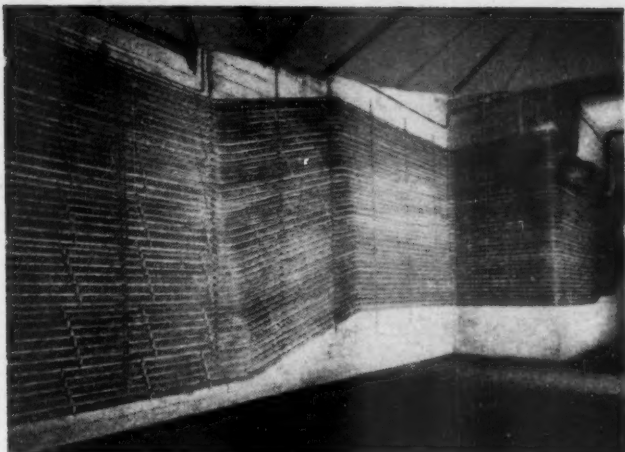
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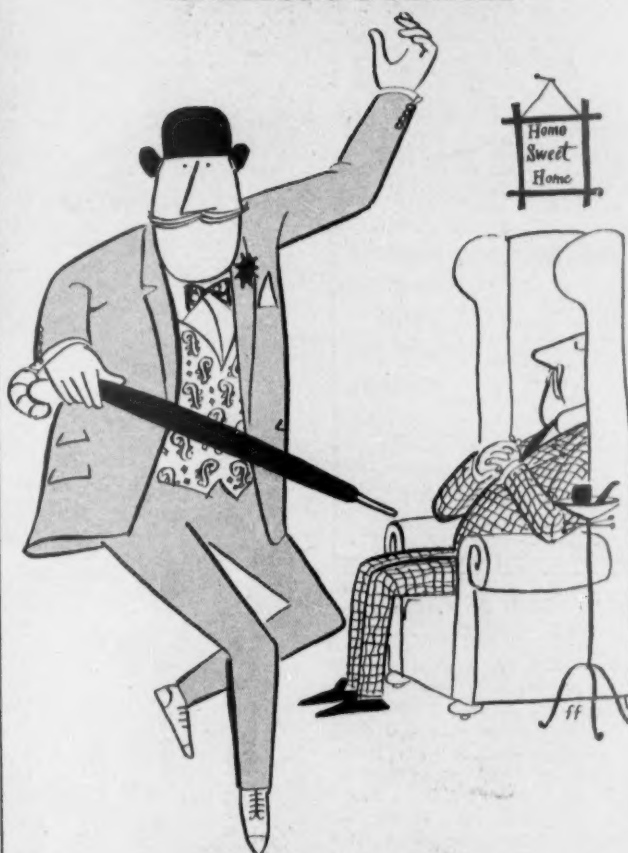
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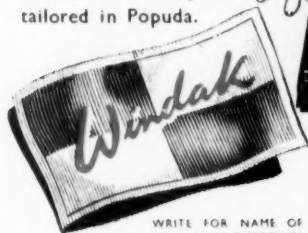
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